



Current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney

Report 21

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6



Portfolio Committee No. 6 - Transport and the Arts

Current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney

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Chair: Ms Cate Faerhmann MLC



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Terms of reference

1. That Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts inquire into and report on the current and future public transport needs for Western Sydney, and in particular:
 - (a) the availability and accessibility of public transport services across Western Sydney, the adequacy of connectivity between public transport hubs and commercial hubs and any gaps in services
 - (b) the current and anticipated levels of demand for public transport services and the public transport requirements to meet this demand
 - (c) the changing nature of public transport needs due to shifting demographics, new suburbs, planned infrastructure and increased density
 - (d) the social, economic and planning impacts of vehicle dependency and poorly integrated public transport
 - (e) the affordability compared with other areas of Greater Sydney and New South Wales and relative to means
 - (f) the role of public transport and future transport technologies to reduce car dependency in Western Sydney, including barriers to improving public transport services
 - (g) the role of the public and private sector, including local government and the use of innovative funding models, such as transit oriented development and value capture mechanisms, in public transport provision
 - (h) the staffing and future workforce planning, taking into account predicted service demand based on predicted population growth in Western Sydney
 - (i) any other related matters.
2. That the committee report by 30 April 2024.¹

The terms of reference for the inquiry were self-referred by the committee on 7 August 2023.

¹ The original reporting date was 29 March 2024 (Minutes, NSW Legislative Council, 22 August 2023, p 376). The reporting date was later extended to 30 April 2024.

Committee details

Committee members

Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC	The Greens	<i>Chair</i>
Hon Sam Farraway MLC	The Nationals	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
Hon Mark Banasiak MLC	Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party	
Hon Anthony D'Adam MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Dr Sarah Kaine MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Bob Nanva MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Natalie Ward MLC	Liberal Party	

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Chair's foreword

I am pleased to present the committee's report into the current and future public transport needs of Western Sydney. This inquiry comes at a pivotal moment for Western Sydney, a region that is undergoing rapid development, population growth and changing public transport travel patterns. What became clear from the outset of this inquiry was that many Western Sydney residents are sick and tired of having extremely limited choices when it comes to being able to get to their destination of choice by bus, train or bicycle.

Public transport is an essential service that connects residents to jobs, services and other opportunities and having easy access to buses, trains and ferries is something that many Sydneysiders take for granted. However, it is clear from this inquiry that many areas of Western Sydney are grossly underserved by public transport. An inadequate public transport system means people have little choice but to drive, leading to various negative social, economic, health and environmental impacts. This report contains 20 recommendations to improve public transport services in Western Sydney both in the short term and into the future.

Investment in public transport has largely prioritised moving people from Western Sydney into the Sydney CBD. This approach has tended to neglect public transport connections within Western Sydney and is particularly apparent in terms of north-south connectivity. While the construction of the Metro Western Sydney Airport line to St Marys is a positive step, the committee sees enormous benefits in extending the line to Tallawong and Macarthur and across to Leppington, ultimately completing this important north-south rail link. This connection is critical to Western Sydney's economic and employment growth and recommendations to ensure the extensions occur have been made.

Beyond completing rail links that improve connectivity across Western Sydney, it is equally important to ensure that the public infrastructure provided is accessible to as many residents as possible. Given the time taken to build major public transport projects and the high costs often associated with them, it is crucial there are more stations, particularly on the Metro West and Metro Western Sydney Airport lines. Without additional stations the benefits of these projects may not be fully realised. To that end, the committee makes various recommendations calling on the Government to commit to and deliver additional stations on the Metro West project and immediately assess the feasibility of additional stations on the confirmed section of the Metro Western Sydney Airport line.

The Government has got to stop approving housing development on the outer fringes of Western Sydney without commitment to or investment in public transport infrastructure and services. It's just not good enough that residents of southwest Sydney have no public transport options, and that there are families are moving into these new suburbs without adequate access to functional sewerage or schools.

With recent plans announced by the Government to build housing alongside existing transport infrastructure, it's concerning that developments are still being built in the outer fringes of Western Sydney with no plans for public transport services. The committee has therefore recommended that the Government prioritise the immediate public transport needs of existing and approved, but not yet built, areas of Western Sydney's outer fringes prior to approving more housing development in those precincts.

I am grateful to all participants in this inquiry, whose contributions have been vital in shaping our recommendations. The insight provided by local governments, industry experts, community groups, and the public has been helpful in highlighting the unique challenges and opportunities facing Western Sydney at this transformative time. I would also like to thank my committee colleagues and the secretariat staff for their efforts.

Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC

Committee Chair

Findings

Finding 1**38**

There is an inequitable provision of transport options and infrastructure in Western Sydney. This is particularly the case to new growth areas in southwest Sydney, leaving many people without adequate access to jobs and essential services and entrenching socio-economic barriers experienced in some areas.

Finding 2**101**

Local councils are experts in the public transport needs of their communities and must be included as key stakeholders in the planning for housing, services and infrastructure in the local government area.

Finding 3**101**

There has been an unacceptable delay between infrastructure planning and provision and the development of new suburbs, particularly in the southwest of Sydney, leaving many residents with limited access to public transport.

Finding 4**115**

That it is unacceptable that new suburbs in Western Sydney, such as Wilton and Appin, may be left without public transport despite prior commitments and that development on the outer fringes of Western Sydney continues apace with limited, if any, plans for public transport provision.

Recommendations

- Recommendation 1** **39**
 That the Government ensure culturally and linguistically inclusive measures are in place across public transport services in Western Sydney.
- Recommendation 2** **39**
 That the Government's cost-benefit analyses of public transport projects comprehensively include social, economic and health outcomes in its assessment.
- Recommendation 3** **58**
 That the Government commit to and deliver two further stations west of Sydney Olympic Park on the Metro West line in locations that present further housing and economic revitalisation opportunities.
- Recommendation 4** **59**
 That the Government:
- immediately assess the feasibility of additional stations on the confirmed section of the Metro Western Sydney Airport line so that any planning and development commence by the time of the Airport's opening in 2026
 - ensure planning and development of future extensions to the line include adequate number of, and distance between, stations.
- Recommendation 5** **60**
 That the Government complete, as a matter of urgency, business cases for the extensions of the Metro Western Sydney Airport line, including investigation of the possible alternate extension of the T2 heavy rail line from Leppington to Western Sydney Airport via Oran Park with a commitment to completing the north-south rail link and connection to Leppington by 2032.
- Recommendation 6** **60**
 That the Government urgently investigate extending stage 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail Project so that the line no longer terminates at the Carter Street precinct but continues from there to terminate at Lidcombe railway station.
- Recommendation 7** **65**
 That the Government expedite and broaden the scope of the planning and delivery of 24-hour public transport services to encompass the Sydney region (Western Parkland City, Central River City and Eastern Parkland City).
- Recommendation 8** **81**
 That the Government take urgent action to ensure that, at the least, bus services at a frequency of 30 minutes or less are available in:
- new development areas in Western Sydney prior to residents moving in or, in cases where they have already moved in, as soon as possible from now
 - other more established areas of Western Sydney where bus services do not yet meet this target.

- Recommendation 9** **82**
That the Government consider:
- allocating initial funding in the next budget to fund 2,000 bus shelters across Greater Sydney, with a particular focus on Western Sydney and bus stops located near schools, hospitals, and aged care facilities
 - providing ongoing dedicated funding to local councils for upgrades and maintenance of bus stop infrastructure.
- Recommendation 10** **83**
That the Government prioritise the delivery of a rapid bus network and commit to funding the requisite infrastructure across Western Sydney.
- Recommendation 11** **84**
That the Government conduct a detailed review of F3 Parramatta River line's operations, including an assessment of the feasibility and potential impacts of increasing the frequency, speed and stopping patterns of the service.
- Recommendation 12** **89**
That the Government commit to funding a program that builds and upgrades footpaths in Western Sydney that have been identified by local councils as limiting walkability, safety and connectivity to transport, services and jobs.
- Recommendation 13** **89**
That the Government commit to funding Sydney's Strategic Cycleway Corridors in Western Sydney to deliver the network by 2030.
- Recommendation 14** **101**
That the Government prioritise the development of public transport infrastructure and services in tandem with road projects to ensure more sustainable, liveable communities and to better prepare for future population growth and to meet its net zero targets.
- Recommendation 15** **114**
That the Government commit to mode share targets within integrated land use and transport planning considerations for Western Sydney, to encourage greater uptake of public transport.
- Recommendation 16** **115**
That the Government prioritise the immediate public transport needs of existing and approved, but not yet built, areas of Western Sydney's outer fringes prior to approving more housing development in those precincts.
- Recommendation 17** **115**
That the Government provide local councils with a legislated role in the planning and delivery of Transport-Oriented Development precincts in their local government area.
- Recommendation 18** **119**
That the Government conduct a comprehensive review of the existing contributions framework that aims to identify and implement innovative funding strategies, including value capture when land is rezoned, that can support the accelerated delivery of public transport infrastructure in Western Sydney.

Recommendation 19

121

That the Government undertake a review of relevant legislation and regulations to take into consideration the growing popularity of micro-mobility services and allow for their safe and widespread integration into the public transport network in Western Sydney and more broadly, across New South Wales.

Recommendation 20

121

That the Government take into consideration emerging transport technologies – such as automated vehicles – as well as any associated workforce planning, safety considerations and community attitudes in the design and planning of public transport infrastructure.

Conduct of inquiry

The terms of reference for the inquiry were self-referred by the committee on 7 August 2023.

The committee received 70 submissions.

The committee held three public hearings: one at Parliament House in Sydney, one at Western Sydney University in Rydalmere and one at the Campbelltown Arts Centre in Campbelltown.

Inquiry related documents are available on the committee's website, including submissions, hearing transcripts, tabled documents and answers to questions on notice.

Chapter 1 Overview of Western Sydney's public transport system

Western Sydney is an area experiencing rapid population growth. It faces the complex challenge of meeting existing and future demand for efficient public transport services while also accommodating its evolving urban landscape. This chapter presents an overview of Western Sydney, a region characterised by its diverse demographics, expansive geography, and significant economic contribution. It will identify emerging trends and challenges within the current public transport system that are pivotal to the region's connectivity and development. The chapter will then highlight anticipated population growth and the corresponding need for enhanced public transport infrastructure and services. Finally, it will outline various ongoing projects, plans, and programs designed to support and sustain the changing needs of the region.

The region and its public transport system

Western Sydney: Key features

- 1.1 The following section provides an overview of Western Sydney and its public transport system. It also details some of the main obstacles that affect peoples' ability to use the system, both currently and in the future.

Geographical extent, land use and dwellings

- 1.2 The geographical extent of Western Sydney is subject to differing opinions on the region's boundaries. For example, Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) Ltd, declared that 'since 2015, I've seen the definition of "Western Sydney" change on no less than 18 occasions'.²
- 1.3 For the purposes of this report, Western Sydney encompasses the following 13 Local Government Areas (LGAs): Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Canterbury Bankstown, Cumberland, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Liverpool, Parramatta, Penrith, The Hills, and Wollondilly. These 13 LGAs having been adopted by the Government in its 2023-24 Budget Papers entitled *Our plan for Western Sydney*.³
- 1.4 This report will also refer to the city definitions from the Government's *Greater Sydney Region Plan: A Metropolis of Three Cities* and subsequent *Six Cities Region Discussion Paper*.
- Western Parkland City: Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Liverpool, Penrith and Wollondilly

² Evidence, Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 10. See also: Evidence, Dr George Greiss, Chair, Mayoral Forum, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, p 10; Submission 27, Building Beautifully, p 2; Submission 54, Ms Ally Dench, p 2, Submission 59, Action for Public Transport Inc., p 1.

³ NSW Government, *2023-2024 Budget: Our Plan for Western Sydney*, p 7.

- Central River City: Canterbury-Bankstown, Cumberland, Parramatta, Georges River, The Hills and Blacktown
- Eastern Harbour City: Bayside, Burwood, Canada Bay, Hornsby, Hunters Hill, Inner West, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Mosman, North Sydney, Northern Beaches, Randwick, Ryde, Strathfield, Sydney, Sutherland, Willoughby, Woollahra, and Waverley.⁴

- 1.5** Western Sydney has substantial urban, rural and natural areas, covering a total land area of nearly 9,000 square kilometres.⁵ Western Parkland City represents 51 per cent of all land designated for urban use in Greater Sydney.⁶ The urban development front of the Western Parkland City is stretched across a 72 kilometre corridor, the only such greenfield area in Australia.⁷ In 2021, over 4,000 hectares of land was rezoned in the Western Parkland City for employment purposes in the Aerotropolis, equating to 20 per cent of all employment land in Greater Sydney. However, whilst this land has been rezoned, significant investment is required in services such as water, utilities and road infrastructure to take place to enable development.⁸
- 1.6** In 2021, Western Sydney had over 900,000 dwellings, with an average household size of 2.95 persons, and 295.9 persons per square kilometre. Of all dwellings, 67.8 per cent were separate houses and 31.7 per cent were medium to high density dwellings. This compares to 53.4 per cent and 46 per cent in the remaining Greater Sydney region respectively.⁹
- 1.7** The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, which represents the eight councils that make up Western Parklands City,¹⁰ noted that outside of the 'key strategic centres, the majority of residents live in low-density suburbs far from the strategic centres and employment hubs they access on a daily basis'.¹¹

⁴ Greater Sydney Commission, *Greater Sydney Region Plan: A Metropolis of Three Cities*, p 6 and Greater Cities Commission, *The Six Cities Region Discussion Paper*, September 2022, p 11. Note, in 2022, a subsequent Six Cities Discussion Paper was published which outlined three additional cities within the Greater Sydney region, including Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle, Central Coast, and Illawarra-Shoalhaven.

⁵ Profile id. *Western Sydney (LGA) Land use*, <https://profile.id.com.au/cws/about?WebID=11444100>.

⁶ Tabled document, Australian Government, *Independent Western Sydney Transport Infrastructure Panel Report*, 16 November 2023, p 20.

⁷ Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 1. See also: Western Parkland City Authority, *Western Parkland City Blueprint 2022*, p 19. Greenfield development, involves the construction of new buildings and infrastructure on previously undeveloped land, typically located on the outskirts of cities or in rural areas. On the other hand, infill development refers to the process of developing vacant or underutilised land within existing urban areas.

⁸ Tabled document, Australian Government, *Independent Western Sydney Transport Infrastructure Panel Report*, 16 November 2023, p 20.

⁹ NSW Department of Planning and Environment, 2022 CPA Population and Dwelling projections. See also: Profile id. *Western Sydney (LGA) Land use*, <https://profile.id.com.au/cws/about?WebID=11444100>.

¹⁰ See Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 1 which notes that Sydney's Parkland Councils are Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Liverpool, Penrith and Wollondilly.

¹¹ Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 3.

Diverse demographics and significant economic contribution

- 1.8** According to the 2023-2024 NSW State Budget (hereafter 2023-24 Budget), Western Sydney is the 'fastest-growing and most diverse region of New South Wales'. It is home to more than 2.65 million people (32.5 per cent of New South Wales' population) living in the 13 LGAs listed above.¹²
- 1.9** More than 454,000 households in Western Sydney are families with children, and 37.9 per cent of its residents speak a language other than English at home.¹³ Western Sydney has a 'younger population age profile than Eastern Sydney, but its population is ageing with almost one in five people aged 65 or older by 2041'.¹⁴
- 1.10** It is also home to 'Australia's largest urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, with 54,498 people or 2.1 per cent of the total population identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in 2021'.¹⁵
- 1.11** Western Sydney is 'Australia's third largest economy', driven by a large manufacturing and industrial sector¹⁶. With 'more than 108,000 employing businesses', the region accounted for 'one fifth of New South Wales' gross state product in 2021-22' and '31.4 per cent of the state's workforce'.¹⁷
- 1.12** Notwithstanding its significant economic contribution, it has been recognised by State and Australian Governments that Western Sydney residents face unique challenges compared to other Greater Sydney cities, for example:
- **Job creation vs. population growth:** In the Western Parkland City, the pace of job creation in the region traditionally lags behind population growth. In 2021, there were 0.4 jobs generated per resident in the region compared to 0.7 jobs per resident in the Eastern Harbour City.¹⁸
 - **Socio-economic disadvantage:** Western Sydney has a higher proportion of residents with a lower socio-economic profile.¹⁹
 - **Environmental vulnerabilities:** Western Parkland City is one of Australia's regions most susceptible to floods and bushfires. It faces a higher degree of vulnerability to extreme heat when compared to other parts of Greater Sydney. In 2018-19, Western Parkland City encountered approximately 37 days with temperatures reaching or

¹² NSW Government, *2023-2024 Budget: Our Plan for Western Sydney*, p 7.

¹³ NSW Government, *2023-2024 Budget: Our Plan for Western Sydney*, p 7.

¹⁴ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 13.

¹⁵ NSW Government, *2023-2024 Budget: Our Plan for Western Sydney*, p 7.

¹⁶ Tabled document, Australian Government, *Independent Western Sydney Transport Infrastructure Panel Report*, 16 November 2023, p 8 and 22.

¹⁷ NSW Government, *2023-2024 Budget: Our Plan for Western Sydney*, p 7.

¹⁸ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 17.

¹⁹ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 17.

surpassing 35 degrees Celsius, in contrast to just six such days in the Eastern Harbour City.²⁰

Housing and cost of living crisis

- 1.13** According to the Government, the housing crisis in New South Wales is characterised by a significant gap between housing supply and demand, making it the primary cost of living pressure for many households, with New South Wales lagging in housing completions compared to other states.²¹
- 1.14** To alleviate this issue, housing targets have been committed to by the Government in line with the State's population share, delivering at least 376,000 new homes by 2029.²² Urban Taskforce noted that Western Sydney by June 2029, would be expected to accommodate 85,000 to 90,000 new greenfield homes, equivalent to two thirds of the State's total new greenfield homes.²³
- 1.15** The intricate connection between public transport provision, housing availability and density; and the broader cost-of-living challenges faced by residents has been a recurring theme throughout this inquiry. For example, Urban Taskforce stated 'investment in economic infrastructure like public transport drives and supports diversity in housing supply required to address the State's housing supply crisis'.²⁴
- 1.16** Campbelltown City Council reported that annual vehicle-related expenses in Sydney average \$25,600 per vehicle, with costs disproportionately falling on households with more vehicles and longer trips.²⁵
- 1.17** Dr George Greiss, Mayor, Campbelltown City Council expressed concern about the community's ability to absorb these vehicle related expenses in the context of cost-of-living pressures and mortgage stress:

...[We are] concerned about the community's ability to absorb the \$25,000-odd per year cost of owning a car in Sydney. This is of great concern in the context of cost of living, with parts of the LGA experiencing some of the highest rates of mortgage

²⁰ Tabled document, Australian Government, *Independent Western Sydney Transport Infrastructure Panel Report*, 16 November 2023, p 8 and 20.

²¹ Media release, The Premier and Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, *A Shared Responsibility: The plan to begin addressing the housing crisis in NSW*, 7 December 2023, <https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/addressing-housing-crisis-nsw>.

²² Answers to supplementary questions, Cumberland City Council, p 2.

²³ Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (previously Department of Planning and Environment), *Explanation of Intended Effect: Changes to create low-and mid-rise housing*, December 2023, p 7, <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-12/eie-changes-to-create-low-and-mid-rise-housing.pdf>.

²⁴ Submission 58, Urban Taskforce, p 2.

²⁵ Submission 21, Campbelltown City Council, p 8. The vehicle-related expenses referred to are based on the Australian Automobile Association's transport affordability index. Fuel composes 20 per cent of those costs and tolls a further 19 per cent. The following inquiry participants also referred to this data: Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Council, p 15; Submission 24, Camden Council, p 13; Submission 32, Fairfield City Council, p 8.

stress in New South Wales, and being among the most socio-economically disadvantaged populations in Australia.²⁶

- 1.18** Regarding housing supply in Western Sydney, it was commonly argued that housing needs to align with the provision of public transport infrastructure and other amenities, with Mr David Harding, Executive Director, Policy and Advocacy, Business NSW explaining:

We can't look at housing separately from public transport. When we're approving very significant numbers of people to live in expanded parts of Sydney up to 80 or 90 kilometres away from the eastern harbour city, it needs to be a fundamental part of the discussion earlier rather than later, because it's not only very expensive to retrofit but it's also quite difficult and disturbing.²⁷

- 1.19** Likewise, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parklands Councils, explained what is currently occurring in new growth areas of southwest Sydney:

...[W]e have the fastest growing areas in New South Wales and Sydney and Australia. And we have land that is zoned. It is ready for housing, and actually the thing that is stopping the housing going into those places is State infrastructure, which are water and transport.²⁸

Current public transport system: Key trends and challenges

- 1.20** There are public transport (bus, rail, ferry and active transport) options available in Western Sydney.

- 1.21** Greater Sydney including the Western Parkland City, the Central River City and the Eastern Harbour City is served by the Sydney trains network. This network is made up of the following lines:

- T1 – North Shore and Western Lines
- T2 – Inner West and Leppington Line
- T3 – Bankstown Line
- T4 – Eastern Suburbs and Illawarra Line
- T5 – Cumberland Line
- T7 – Olympic Park Line
- T8 – Airport and South Line
- T9 – Northern Line.²⁹

²⁶ Evidence, Dr George Greiss, Mayor, Campbelltown City Council, 4 December 2023, pp 36-37.

²⁷ Evidence, Mr David Harding, Executive Director, Policy and Advocacy, Business NSW, 4 December 2023, p 6.

²⁸ Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parklands Councils, 4 December 2023, p 14.

²⁹ Transport for NSW, *Key to icons and line codes*, <https://transportnsw.info/plan/help/key-to-icons-line-codes#accordion-train-line-abbreviation-code-key-content>.

1.22 The T6 Carlingford Line was closed in January 2020 to be converted to the Parramatta Light Rail, discussed further below.³⁰ A map of the Sydney trains network follows.

Figure 1 Sydney trains network (as of April 2024)



Source: Transport for NSW, Sydney Rail Network, <https://transportnsw.info/document/1433/sydney-trains-network-map.pdf>

1.23 Other modes of public transport currently available, under construction or planned for Western Sydney are detailed paragraphs 1.65 to 1.87 below.

1.24 Notwithstanding the current public transport services available, the Government noted that many employment precincts, hospitals, schools, and higher education destinations in Western

Sydney remain 'underserved' by public transport.³¹ As a result, the region is heavily dependent on private vehicles for all purposes of travel, with the Government noting 72 per cent of households in the Western Parkland City own two cars or more compared to 51 per cent in the Eastern Harbour City.³²

Current public transport usage and travel patterns

1.25 According to travel pattern data collected by Transport for NSW in 2022-23 the following key transportation trends appear for residents of Western Parkland City:

- Rely primarily on private vehicles for travel, with public transport mode share improving towards the east. In Western Parkland City, over 50 per cent of travel is done by private vehicles, with public transport accounting for only 5 per cent.
- Travel further and longer distances on public transport compared to other modes of travel. On average, Western Parkland City residents travelled 20 kms or 32 minutes by public transport and 13 kms or 21 minutes by private vehicle.
- Travel less by walking. Walking accounts for only 10 per cent of total trips taken in Western Parkland City and 13 per cent of total trips taken in Central River City, compared to 20 per cent in Eastern Harbour City.
- Travel more for social and recreational purposes than for commuting purposes. Only 14 per cent of total trips across Western Parkland City were for commute purposes compared to 30 per cent for shopping, social and recreation purposes.³³

1.26 Underscoring data that reveals residents of Western Sydney travel further and longer distances, the Centre for Western Sydney notes 29.9 per cent of residents travel outside the region for work each day.³⁴ Canterbury-Bankstown Council elaborates for its local government area (LGA), commenting '64.8 per cent of residents work outside the LGA with nearly 27 per cent [of] residents working to the north, south and west of the LGA, while 58.1 per cent of workers travel into the LGA and live outside'.³⁵

1.27 The Government explains that public transport patronage across Western Sydney and the provision of services currently provided remains low in comparison to other parts of Greater Sydney. To demonstrate, in July 2023, buses operating in the southwest region made a total of 459,000 trips, only 2.7 per cent of the entire 17 million bus trips taken across Greater Sydney during that month. The southwest region is home to about 425,000 people, which is 8.5 per cent of the total population of Greater Sydney.³⁶

1.28 The southwest region offers 4 per cent of Greater Sydney's overall daily bus service kilometres. This translates to roughly 55,000 daily bus service kilometres per million residents

³¹ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 1.

³² Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 15.

³³ Transport for NSW, *Data by six cities*, <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/data-by-six-cities>.

³⁴ Submission 52, Centre for Western Sydney, p 10.

³⁵ Submission 31, Canterbury-Bankstown Council, p 1.

³⁶ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 11.

in these southwest regions. In contrast, the Eastern Harbour City area boasts over 170,000 daily service kilometres per million residents for buses and light rail.³⁷

1.29 Across the Greater Sydney public transport system, fewer people have been using the network post the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government note that specific rail lines at certain times of the peak period, such as the Western line or the T8 towards Campbelltown, are at full capacity, however, on average, loading on a lot of those lines is still below usage levels pre-2019.³⁸

1.30 Despite the above data showing limited use of public transport, this doesn't necessarily reflect the existing need for improved services. According to inquiry participants there are obstacles in connectivity, accessibility, availability, and affordability that are deterring potential users from utilising the system.³⁹ These challenges are summarised below and discussed more comprehensively in subsequent chapters.

Lack of connectivity, access, availability and affordability

1.31 Historical planning and investment has favoured infrastructure and development along transport corridors radiating from Eastern Sydney, placing it as the primary employment centre in Greater Sydney. The report of the Independent Western Sydney Transport Infrastructure Panel noted an imbalance in public transport services and infrastructure between Eastern and Western Sydney, especially a lack of adequate north-south connections across Western Sydney.⁴⁰

1.32 The Government noted that according to Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL), which measures public transport accessibility based on walking distance and time to nearby public transport stops and the frequency of public transport of services at each stop, 74 per cent of Western Sydney residents experience low to medium access to public transport during the morning peak hours (7 am-8 am).⁴¹

1.33 In contrast, only 29 per cent of residents in the Eastern Harbour City face similar access challenges during these hours. Outside of peak periods, the situation in Western Sydney worsens, with the percentage of residents with low to medium public transport access reaching 99 per cent between 10 pm and 11 pm.⁴²

1.34 According to the Government, rail services in the region are 'more limited' in some circumstances. For example, the T1 Richmond line that services the northwest of Sydney,

³⁷ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 11.

³⁸ Evidence, Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director Public Transport, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 42.

³⁹ See for example: Submission 52, Centre for Western Sydney, p 3; Submission 29, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 8 and Submission 54, Ms Ally Dench, p 5.

⁴⁰ Tabled document, Australian Government, *Independent Western Sydney Transport Infrastructure Panel Report*, 16 November 2023, p 27.

⁴¹ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 9.

⁴² Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 9.

operates every 30 minutes, even in peak times, whereas most areas in Sydney typically have services every 15 minutes or better.⁴³

1.35 In Western Sydney, public transport connectivity, accessibility and availability lag significantly behind Eastern Sydney, a point made by various inquiry participants:

- The Urban Development Institute of Australia (NSW) reported that 'inadequate public transport is evident across the West, with on average one rail station per 30,000 people in Western Sydney, compared to one every 15,000 people in the Eastern suburbs'. There is a clear 'mismatch' in the number of heavy and light rail stations and lines, with the Eastern Harbour City having 'four times the number of stations and more than double the number of heavy and light rail lines' than Western Parkland City.⁴⁴
- The Centre for Western Sydney highlighted that current residents in the region who use public transport 'face a lengthy walk to access services, with less than one in five dwellings in Sydney's West located within 400 metres walking distance of a regularly serviced public transport stop'.⁴⁵
- The Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils noted there are large variances of access across the LGAs in the region. For example, in 2016, Canterbury-Bankstown and Cumberland had the highest proportion of residents living within 800 metres of train stations, both over 40 per cent. However, some LGAs have less than 10 per cent of residents who live in close proximity to train stations, including Camden where there are 'no existing facilities' near the population.⁴⁶
- Bus NSW explained that across Western Sydney, few bus routes operate more than 45 services per day and many others have less than 12-hour coverage over the course of a day. By contrast, Eastern Harbour City has bus routes with upwards of 200 services per day, including services with all-day and overnight coverage.⁴⁷

1.36 According to the Government, residents of Western Sydney typically have to travel further and longer for all purposes, the costs associated are often higher, reducing the affordability of travel compared to other Greater Sydney cities.⁴⁸

Projected population growth: Demand for public transport services

1.37 The Government stated that between 2021 and 2041, Western Sydney is projected to increase by 850,000 people, becoming home to 3.61 million. The highest level of housing completions over the next five years expected to occur in the local government areas of Blacktown, The Hills, Liverpool, Parramatta and Camden.⁴⁹

⁴³ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 9.

⁴⁴ Submission 37, Urban Development Institute of Australia, p 4.

⁴⁵ Submission 52, Centre for Western Sydney, p 3.

⁴⁶ Submission 30, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd, p 4.

⁴⁷ Submission 40, BusNSW, p 2.

⁴⁸ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 17.

⁴⁹ Evidence, Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 40.

- 1.38** Within the Camden local government area, for example, 'the community has over 130,000 residents. By 2036, in just 12 years, the Camden community will again double in size to more than 250,000'.⁵⁰
- 1.39** According to the Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, Western Parkland City is 'set to absorb 34 per cent of Sydney's projected population growth in the decade to 2041'.⁵¹
- 1.40** The Government and most inquiry participants agreed that projected population growth will increase demand for public transport services and transport infrastructure.⁵² The Centre for Western Sydney added that failure to urgently address the region's transport infrastructure needs will 'compound the region's reliance on private vehicles, lead to further congestion on its roads and continue to produce negative environmental impacts'.⁵³
- 1.41** Wollondilly Shire Council, an area experiencing rapid population growth, explained that their concerns for existing transport capacity issues, will only be exacerbated by projected population growth.⁵⁴
- 1.42** Patterns of travel are also anticipated to change. By 2056, the demand for north-south travel in Western Sydney will surpass east-west travel. According to Transport for NSW's modelling, there will be a considerable rise in the volume of north-south journeys in the region over the next few decades.⁵⁵
- 1.43** With the upcoming Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis operating 24/7, the Government highlighted that many workers will require public transport access at all times of the day.⁵⁶
- 1.44** Additionally, the Government noted that the shift towards remote work arising from the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly influenced patterns of travel, increasing demand for connectivity between local centres, public spaces, and residential areas.⁵⁷
- 1.45** Notwithstanding changing travel patterns and increasing demand for localised connectivity, NSW Government forecasts indicate that to accommodate population growth within the current network, by 2036, up to 190 additional bus services might be needed during peak

⁵⁰ Evidence, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council, 9 February 2024, p 24.

⁵¹ Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 1.

⁵² See for example: Submission 67, Transport for NSW and the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 11; Submission 39, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 5; Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 3; Submission 43, Cumberland City Council, p 10; Submission 44, Blue Mountains City Council, p 6 and Submission 52, The Centre for Western Sydney, p 7.

⁵³ Submission 52, Centre for Western Sydney, p 7.

⁵⁴ Submission 68, Wollondilly Shire Council, p 7.

⁵⁵ Tabled document, Australian Government, *Independent Western Sydney Transport Infrastructure Panel Report*, 16 November 2023, p 33.

⁵⁶ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 17.

⁵⁷ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 12.

hours. Additionally, many of the heavy rail lines in the network are projected to face situations where passenger demand surpasses the available capacity.⁵⁸

Ongoing public transport plans, strategies, projects and programs

Key public transport plans, strategies and programs to support connectivity and growth in Western Sydney

- 1.46 Since 2018, various plans, strategies and programs have been developed to guide future development and improvements to public transport infrastructure in Western Sydney. Detailed below are the significant documents that will be referenced in further chapters of this report.

Western Sydney City Deal

- 1.47 The Western Sydney City Deal, signed in 2018, is a collaborative agreement between Australian and NSW governments and the eight local councils that form the Western Parkland City to drive development in Western Sydney over the next two decades.⁵⁹

- 1.48 Central to this agreement is the development of the Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis and delivery of rail and bus links to the new airport by the time of its opening in 2026.⁶⁰

Greater Sydney Region Plan and related documents

- 1.49 The NSW Government's *Greater Sydney Region Plan: A Metropolis of three cities (2018)* and *Six Cities Region Discussion Paper (2022)*, detailed a 20-to-40-year 'vision' for a six cities region within Greater Sydney, aiming to 'rebalance' the area by 'placing housing, jobs, infrastructure and services within easier reach of more residents'.⁶¹
- 1.50 These plans introduced the concepts of '30-minute cities' and '15-minute neighbourhoods'. Whereby residents of each city are 30-minutes by public transport to strategic centres, jobs and other key destinations including health and education and within a 15-minute walk or cycle to housing, services, jobs and amenities in their local centre and neighbourhood.⁶² There was support for the concepts amongst inquiry participants, however, it was noted that Western Parkland City and Central River City lag far behind Eastern Harbour City in

⁵⁸ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 12.

⁵⁹ Australian Government, NSW Government and Western Parkland City councils, *Western Sydney City Deal*, 2018, <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/migrated/cities/city-deals/western-sydney/files/western-sydney-city-deal.pdf>.

⁶⁰ Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parklands Councils, p 3.

⁶¹ Greater Sydney Commission, *Greater Sydney Region Plan: A Metropolis of Three Cities*, p 6 and Greater Cities Commission, *The Six Cities Region Discussion Paper*, September 2022.

⁶² Submission 41, Planning Institute of Australia, p 4. See also: Greater Sydney Commission, *Greater Sydney Region Plan: A Metropolis of Three Cities*, p 6 and Greater Cities Commission, *The Six Cities Region Discussion Paper*, September 2022, p 22.

achieving this goal.⁶³ It was also highlighted that various projects, priorities and initiatives were needed to ensure that this goal was realised. Following chapters of this report details these actions.

- 1.51** The plans outlined the intended integration and connectivity of different spatial components throughout Greater Sydney and its cities, encompassing everything from mass transit networks and economic corridors to green spaces and natural areas.⁶⁴
- 1.52** Cumberland City Council explains that their own strategic land use framework aligns with directions set out in the *Greater Sydney Region Plan* and the corresponding Central City District Plan. These plans have been used to 'strategically set [the Council's] contribution to the region's population, housing and jobs growth', however, the amount of current growth that Cumberland has achieved, has resulted in a congested road network and overcrowded rail services at peak times.⁶⁵
- 1.53** Underpinned by the *Greater Sydney Region Plan*, in 2018, the Government released the *Future Transport Strategy 2056*, providing in more detail the anticipated networks, investments and connections for the future public transport system in Western Sydney.⁶⁶
- 1.54** An updated version of the *Future Transport Strategy* was published in 2022. The Government noted that the strategy is 'progressively updated and refreshed, typically when there are changes to the land-use and housing forecasts and targets'... 'so that we can integrate transport amenities planning'.⁶⁷

National housing targets and transport-oriented development programs

- 1.55** To address the housing supply shortfall, in 2022, the Australian Government along with state and territory governments signed the National Housing Accord (the Housing Accord), committing to 'an initial, aspirational national target of delivering a total of 1.2 million new, well-located homes over five years from 2024', and 'up to 20,000 affordable dwellings'.⁶⁸
- 1.56** The Government has announced various reforms and funding measures to alleviate housing supply and demand issues and provide residents housing accessible by public and active transport and other essential services.

⁶³ Submission 40, BusNSW, p 1.

⁶⁴ Greater Sydney Commission, *Greater Sydney Region Plan: A Metropolis of Three Cities*, p 12. Following the Greater Sydney Region Plan, district plans were created for each of the three cities. Relevant to this inquiry are the Western City District Plan and Central City District Plan.

⁶⁵ Submission 43, Cumberland City Council, pp 6 and 10.

⁶⁶ Greater Sydney Commission, *Greater Sydney Region Plan: A Metropolis of Three Cities*, p 12.

⁶⁷ Evidence, Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 36.

⁶⁸ Australian Government, *The National Housing Accord 2022*, <https://ministers.treasury.gov.au/sites/ministers.treasury.gov.au/files/2022-10/national-housing-accord-2022.pdf>, pp 1-2.

- 1.57** For example, the Transport Oriented Development (TOD) program, announced in December 2023, plans to 'create more well-located homes close to transport, jobs and services' and 'improve the development pattern of our cities by reducing urban sprawl'.⁶⁹
- 1.58** Whilst there was support for the TOD program, concern was expressed that the change in focus would see a move away from previous infrastructure commitments that provided much needed public transport services to areas currently without any, for example, Wilton in the southwest.⁷⁰
- 1.59** The TOD program will be delivered in two parts, encompassing 39 transport hubs across Greater Sydney (see below footnote), including some areas within Western Sydney:
- Part one seeks to accelerate delivery of high and mid-rise housing and necessary infrastructure on land within 1,200 metres of eight priority transport hubs, aiming to provide 47,800 new homes within 15 years.
 - Part two aims to provide housing in precincts with existing infrastructure on land within 400 metres of 31 stations, with 138,000 new homes over the next 15 years.⁷¹
- 1.60** To facilitate the TOD program, the Government will lead rezonings within the precincts; and aim to ensure the inclusion of affordable housing, create faster assessment pathways for developments, provide the relevant infrastructure and introduce new planning controls.⁷²
- 1.61** Additionally, the Government's Housing and Productivity Contribution (H&PC) replaces the previous Special Infrastructure Contribution in New South Wales planning legislation. The Government notes this is 'a critical funding instrument levying funds from developers to support the early delivery of transport options in growth areas'.⁷³
- 1.62** According to the Urban Development Institute of Australia, the H&PC framework provides opportunities to 'get regional infrastructure moving quickly'.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ NSW Government, *Transport Oriented Development Program*, December 2023, <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-12/transport-oriented-development-program.pdf>, p 3.

⁷⁰ Evidence, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor of Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024.

⁷¹ NSW Government, *Transport Oriented Development Program*, December 2023, <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-12/transport-oriented-development-program.pdf>, pp 4-9. The eight accelerated precincts included in part one of the program are Bankstown, Bays West, Bella Vista, Crows Nest, Homebush Hornsby, Kellyville and Macquarie Park. Part two precincts include: Adamstown station, Ashfield station, Banksia station, Berala station, Booragul station, Canterbury metro station, Corrimal station, Croydon station, Dapto station, Dulwich Hill station, Gordon station, Gosford station, Hamilton station, Killara station, Kogarah station, Kotara station, Lidcombe station, Lindfield station, Marrickville station, Morisset station, Newcastle Interchange, North Strathfield metro station, North Wollongong station, Rockdale station, Roseville station, St Marys metro station, Teralba station, Tuggerah station, Turrella station, Wiley Park metro station and Wyong station.

⁷² NSW Government, *Transport Oriented Development Program*, December 2023, <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-12/transport-oriented-development-program.pdf>, pp 4-9.

⁷³ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 20.

⁷⁴ Submission 37, Urban Development Institute of Australia, p 10.

Other government plans

- 1.63** The Government also employs a variety of planning frameworks to guide urban development and the accompanying public transport infrastructure in key growth areas and precincts throughout Western Sydney. This includes, the Urban Development Program, Greater Macarthur 2040 Growth Area Plan, Greater Macarthur Transit Corridor, South West Growth Area, Western Sydney Aerotropolis, Orchard Hills precinct planning, the Greater Penrith to Eastern Creek Strategic Framework, and the South West Sydney Structure Plan.⁷⁵
- 1.64** At a local level, councils in Western Sydney have developed their own strategic plans to guide development and accommodate projected growth, incorporating transport priorities that aim to improve connectivity within the local area and to other parts of Western Sydney and Greater Sydney.⁷⁶

Current public transport infrastructure projects, programs and investments

- 1.65** The following section details the key public and active transport infrastructure projects both planned and underway to support growth in Western Sydney and meet the increased demand for a more integrated public transport system within the area.

Metro rail services

- 1.66** Sydney Metro currently consists of four lines; Metro Western Sydney Airport; Metro West; Metro City Southwest and Metro City Northwest:
- Metro Western Sydney Airport, connects St Marys and the new Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport and Aerotropolis, with six stations included on the line. Construction of the project started in late 2020 and is expected to open at the same time as airline passenger services at the new Western Sydney Airport start in 2026.⁷⁷
 - Metro West connects Greater Parramatta and the Sydney CBD, with nine stations included on the 24 kilometre line. Planning for the project began in 2020 and will target an opening date of 2032.⁷⁸
 - Metro Northwest was completed in 2019. It operates every four minutes during peak hour and services 13 metro stations over 36 kilometres, connecting Cudgegong Road,

⁷⁵ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, pp 13-14.

⁷⁶ See for example: Submission 21, Campbelltown City Council, pp 1-2; Submission 33, Liverpool City Council, p 5; Submission 31, Canterbury-Bankstown Council, pp 5-22.

⁷⁷ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 5 and Sydney Metro, *Project overview: About Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/about>.

⁷⁸ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 5 and Sydney Metro, *Project overview: About Sydney Metro West*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/west/project-overview>.

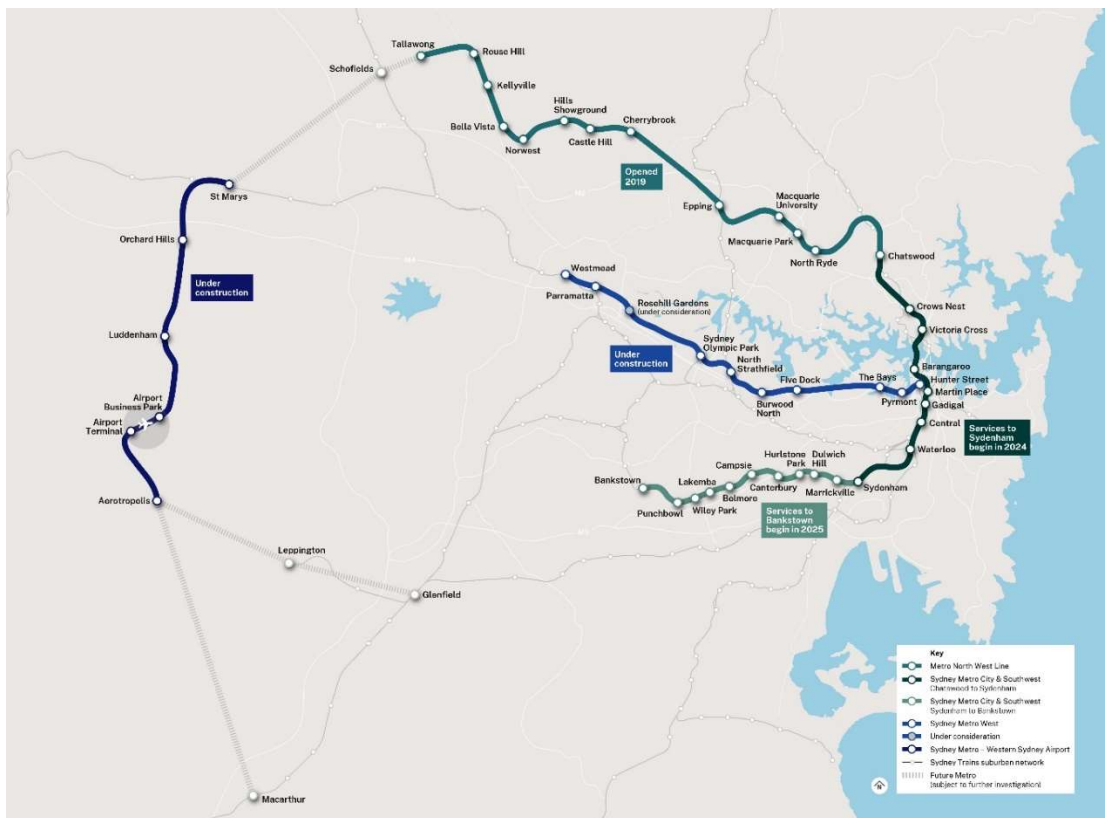
Rouse Hill (Tallawong Station), and Chatswood via Kellyville, Castle Hill, Epping and North Ryde.⁷⁹

- The Metro City and Southwest is a 30 kilometre extension of the metro line from the end of the Metro North West at Chatswood, under Sydney Harbour, through two new Sydney CBD stations and then south west to Sydenham and Bankstown. The Chatswood to CBD section is due to open in 2024.⁸⁰

1.67 The Government has announced varying funding commitments as part of the 2023-24 Budget to either complete or progress the four Sydney Metro lines. Of particular relevance, is funding to develop business cases for proposed line extensions from Bradfield to Glenfield via Leppington; Bradfield to Macarthur via Oran Park and Narellan; and from St Marys to Tallawong via Schofields and Marsden Park.⁸¹

1.68 The figure below details Sydney Metro confirmed services and planned future extensions.

Figure 2 Sydney Metro: Confirmed services and planned future extensions



Source: Sydney Metro, *Planning for future extensions*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/planning-future-extensions>

⁷⁹ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 6; Sydney Metro, *About Sydney Metro*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/about>; and Sydney Metro, *Planning for Future Extensions*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/planning-future-extensions>.

⁸⁰ Sydney Metro, *About Sydney Metro*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/about>.

⁸¹ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 5, 24. See also: Sydney Metro, *Planning for future extensions*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/planning-future-extensions>.

- 1.69** In April 2023, the Government announced an independent review into Sydney Metro to assess its value for money, delivery models, project governance and passenger impacts. On 1 August 2023, the review's interim report summary was released, followed by its final report summary in December 2023.⁸²
- 1.70** Key recommendations of the review include that the Government continue with the conversion and upgrade of the T3 Bankstown line, between Sydenham and Bankstown; urgently finalise a customer options plan for the planned extended shutdown of the T3 Bankstown line; and review the current design and construction plans for station locations for the Metro West project.⁸³
- 1.71** During the inquiry and following completion of the review, the Government committed to the conversion of the T3 Bankstown Line to metro for the Bankstown to Sydenham section of the Metro City and Southwest project and announced that scoping studies would be prepared for two new potential stations west of Sydney Olympic Park, including at Rosehill, for the Metro West project.⁸⁴
- 1.72** The number of and distance between stations along metro lines was of key concern to inquiry participants. In addition, concern was raised in regard to the conversion of the T3 Bankstown Line to metro operations. Chapter 3 will explore these issues in more detail.

Rapid bus service to Western Sydney Airport

- 1.73** A rapid bus service was committed to under the Western Sydney City Deal, intending to connect, the metropolitan centres of Penrith, Liverpool and Campbelltown to the Western Sydney Airport and aerotropolis before its opening in 2026.⁸⁵
- 1.74** According to Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parklands Councils, a rapid bus service is 'almost like a train line' in terms of operations and the planned rapid bus service to the Western Sydney Airport is 'complementary' to the north south rail connection and a way to 'transition...from completely car-based through to rail'.⁸⁶
- 1.75** The Government noted that funding in 2023-24 Budget has been allocated to deliver the rapid bus service connecting Penrith, Liverpool, Campbelltown to the new airport.⁸⁷ At the time of

⁸² Sydney Metro, *Sydney Metro Review*, <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/industry/independent-reviews/sydney-metro-review>.

⁸³ Mr Mike Mrdak AO and Ms Amanda Yeates, *Sydney Metro Independent Review Summary: Interim Report Summary*, published 1 August 2023 and Mr Mike Mrdak AO and Ms Amanda Yeates, *Sydney Metro Independent Review Summary: Final Report Summary*, published 7 December 2023.

⁸⁴ Sydney Metro, *Sydney Metro Review*, <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/industry/independent-reviews/sydney-metro-review>.

⁸⁵ Australian Government and NSW Government, *Western Sydney City Deal*, [western-sydney-city-deal.pdf](https://www.western-sydney-city-deal.pdf) ([infrastructure.gov.au](https://www.infrastructure.gov.au)), p 10.

⁸⁶ Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parklands Councils, 4 December 2023, pp 16 and 17.

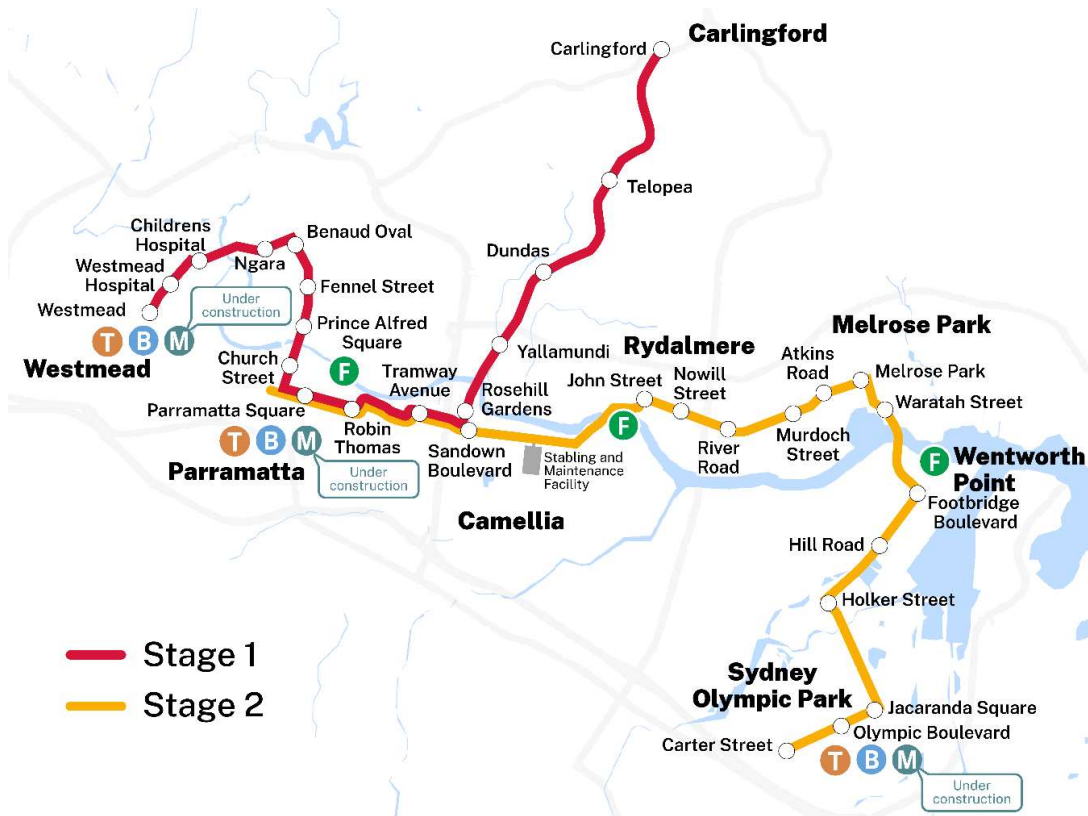
⁸⁷ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 4.

writing this report, the Government is progressing stage one of the project, looking at providing direct links between Penrith, Liverpool and Campbelltown and the airport, 'providing new bus services that have not yet been provided or are available'.⁸⁸

Parramatta Light Rail

- 1.76 Stage 1 of the Parramatta Light Rail connects Westmead to Carlingford via the Parramatta Central Business District and Camellia. Major construction on the line is almost complete, with passenger services due to commence in 2024.⁸⁹
- 1.77 Stage 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail connects stage 1 and Parramatta's Central Business District to Sydney Olympic Park via Camellia ending at the Carter Street precinct.⁹⁰ NSW Planning approval has been granted for stage 2.⁹¹ A map of both stages of the Parramatta Light Rail project follows.

Figure 3 Stage 1 and 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail project



Source: NSW Government, *Parramatta Light Rail Maps*, <https://www.nsw.gov.au/driving-boating-and-transport/projects/maps#toc-stages-1-and-2>

⁸⁸ Evidence, Ms Peta Gamon, Executive Director – Western Sydney Aerotropolis, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 35.

⁸⁹ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 6.

⁹⁰ Transport for NSW, *Parramatta Light Rail*, <https://www.nsw.gov.au/driving-boating-and-transport/projects/parramatta-light-rail>.

⁹¹ Transport for NSW, *Parramatta Light Rail*, <https://www.nsw.gov.au/driving-boating-and-transport/projects/parramatta-light-rail>.

1.78 The City of Parramatta called for completion of Stage 2 of the project, noting that the current preferred alignment will service and provide opportunities for urban renewal to important precincts like Rydalmere and Ermington. In addition, it will capitalise on investment in Stage 1 of the project and support a mode shift in the Central River City from private car to public transport.⁹²

Active transport

1.79 According to various stakeholders addressing the issue of car dependency in the region extends beyond improving public transport options and requires an integrated approach that encourages and adequately invests in active modes of travel, such as walking and cycling.⁹³

1.80 The Government reported that areas of Western Sydney have limited cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, lacking sealed pathways that are conducive and safe for walking, in turn, prohibiting mode shift and encouraging car dependency in some instances.⁹⁴

1.81 According to the Government, there are a range of different initiatives, programs and projects in place to improve walking and cycling outcomes across the State. For example, the Get NSW Active Program, a rolling program which funds local councils planning, development and delivery of local walking and cycling infrastructure, has been allocated \$60 million in 2024-25, with 15 per cent funds to be directed to Western Sydney.⁹⁵

1.82 Additionally, Transport for NSW have developed the Strategic Cycleway Corridors Program, for Western Sydney, this includes 58 cycleway corridors that extend more than 635 kilometres and link key centres.⁹⁶ Work to progress development of the first tranche of priority locations in Western Sydney, as well as for other regions, is currently underway.⁹⁷

1.83 Major transport projects have the ability to incorporate active transport, such as cycleways, in early planning of the project. For example, the Metro Western Sydney Airport project plans to deliver, in consultation with local councils and other stakeholders, '8.8 kilometres of footpaths, shared paths; 6.9 kilometres of cycleways; and storage on day one for 413 bikes, with space provision for 750'.⁹⁸

⁹² Submission 47, City of Parramatta, p 2.

⁹³ See for example: Submission 20, Australasian College of Road Safety, p 3; Submission 31, Canterbury-Bankstown Council, p 1; Submission 32, Fairfield City Council, p 3; Submission 33, Liverpool City Council, p 10; Submission 34, Western Sydney Community Forum, p 7; Submission 36, Committee for Sydney, p 1.

⁹⁴ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 6.

⁹⁵ Answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, p 6.

⁹⁶ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 6.

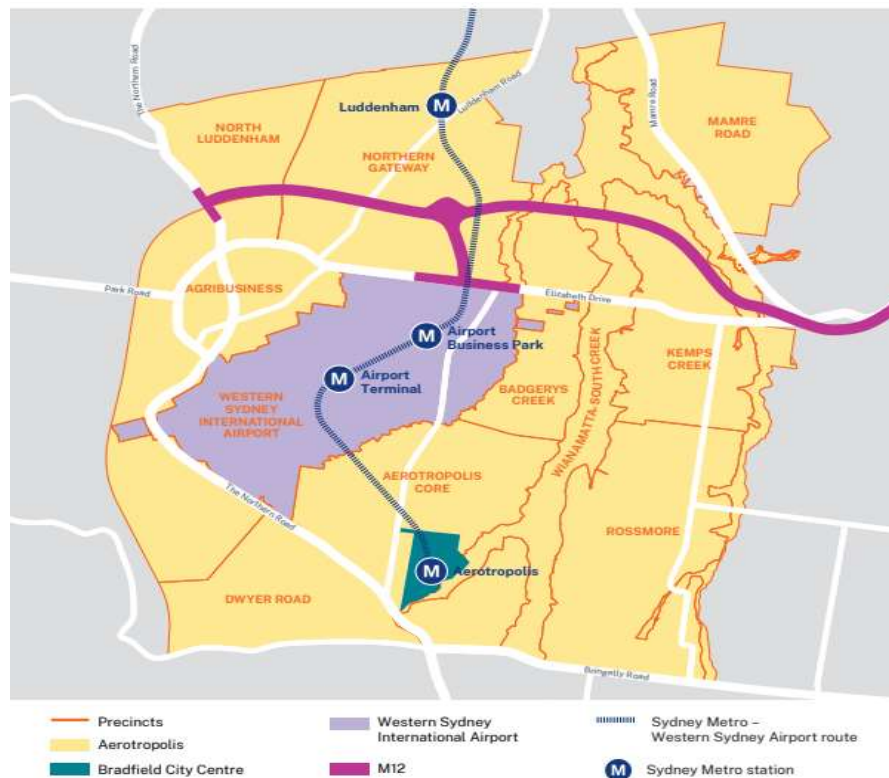
⁹⁷ Answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, 11 March 2024, p 7.

⁹⁸ Evidence, Ms Rebecca McPhee, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Customer Operations and Outcomes, Sydney Metro, 9 February 2024, p 50.

Western Sydney Airport and the Aerotropolis

- 1.84 Western Sydney Airport is located in Sydney’s southwest at Badgery's Creek and is expected to open in late 2026 with initial capacity for 10 million annual passengers and at least 220,000 tonnes of air cargo. The airport will operate 24 hours a day.⁹⁹
- 1.85 In terms of contribution to Western Sydney's economy, the airport currently has over \$400 million invested in local businesses and is predicted to generate around '\$24.6 billion in direct expenditure by 2060 – increasing Australia’s GDP by \$23.9 billion'. The surrounding Aerotropolis precinct is expected to create approximately 80,000 jobs by 2056.¹⁰⁰
- 1.86 Western Sydney Airport Corporation Limited acknowledged the airport's potential impact on the region and Greater Sydney, noting the airport is 'city-shaping infrastructure'. However, they explained that without high-quality ground transport links, including public transport, the airport's 'ability to offer a competitive value proposition and enable growth of the airport is hindered, along with the delivery of the Government’s objectives for Western Sydney'.¹⁰¹
- 1.87 The following figure depicts the Airport and Aerotropolis' location to metro rail and the surrounding precincts planned for growth.

Figure 4 Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis precincts



Source: Western Parkland City Authority, *Western Sydney Aerotropolis*, p 2.

⁹⁹ Submission 62, Western Sydney Airport, p 2, 4 and 7.
¹⁰⁰ Submission 62, Western Sydney Airport, pp 2 and 8.
¹⁰¹ Submission 62, Western Sydney Airport, p 5.

Committee comment

- 1.88** The committee acknowledges the critical importance of advancing the public transport network in Western Sydney. Further the committee also recognises the region's rapid growth, housing pressures, environment vulnerabilities and the essential role that improved connectivity, accessibility, and affordability plays in its development.
- 1.89** Despite various ongoing plans and projects aimed at improving public transport connectivity across the region, there is substantial work remaining to be done to fully meet the evolving needs of Western Sydney's residents. In particular, the committee notes the Government's vision for 15-minute neighbourhoods and 30-minute cities which may not be fully realised without significant and immediate enhancements to the public transport network in Western Sydney and more broadly, Greater Sydney. The following chapters of this report will delve deeper into these issues, identifying critical gaps and challenges, and proposing various recommendations to help enhance the public transport network.

Chapter 2 Gaps and barriers within Western Sydney's existing public transport network

This chapter considers current gaps within Western Sydney's public transport network as identified during the inquiry. The chapter also discusses the need to improve and optimise existing public transport services and enhance connections between public transport hubs and final destinations. Next, various barriers that deter residents in Western Sydney from utilising public transport are explored. The chapter then examines the social, economic, health, and environmental repercussions of these gaps and barriers, which contribute to the region's dependence on cars for transportation. Finally, potential benefits that could be realised through addressing these challenges are discussed.

Subsequent chapters of this report examine in more detail the existing public and active transport network, exploring the prioritisation of transport solutions that seek to address these gaps and barriers and respond to Western Sydney's current and anticipated needs.

Identified gaps within the existing network

- 2.1** The following section outlines various gaps in Western Sydney's existing public transport network. This includes:
- potential improvements to existing services and infrastructure
 - inequitable investment in infrastructure and services
 - challenges related to first and last mile connectivity.
- 2.2** It is noted that chapter 3 examines a lack of north-south connectivity and the broader issue of connectivity throughout Western Sydney and to other parts of Greater Sydney.

Potential improvements to existing services and infrastructure

- 2.3** Inquiry participants also emphasised there should be efforts to optimise and improve the existing public transport network, ensuring it operates as efficiently and effectively as possible and responds to the region's demand for connected, reliable, frequent and accessible public transport.¹⁰²
- 2.4** Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue called for the expansion of current bus services and routes to improve efficiencies and reliability of services so that residents, particularly within disadvantaged areas of Western Sydney, are 'able to

¹⁰² See for example: Submission 2, Mr John Morandini, p 3; Submission 66, Rail, Tram and Bus Union, p 4; Evidence, Mr Kerry Robinson OAM, Chief Executive Officer, Blacktown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 41; Mr Roydon Ng, Convenor, Restore T2 Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line, 4 December 2023, p 55; Evidence, Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 2.

participate in normal life'. Mr Leto explained 'because of the lack of access and reliability, some of that disadvantage continues to be entrenched'.¹⁰³

2.5 Improvement of bus services to new growth areas was also discussed with Mr Matt Gould, Mayor of Wollondilly, stating that bus services in the local government area are 'insufficient', with Wilton, a state-led growth area, having 'bus stops that have never even had a bus pull up at them'. The Mayor expressed 'we need to see a significant increase in both the frequency of buses across the shire as well as the areas they service'.¹⁰⁴

2.6 Mr Matt Doherty, Committee Member, EcoTransit, called for the expansion of established heavy rail lines over investment in new rail infrastructure. He argued there are travel time benefits for residents of Western Sydney as a result of 'small-bore amendments' such as the quadruplication of the East Hills line:

...[W]e should be building on what we've got, on the existing infrastructure, rather than bringing fandangled new metros through cow paddocks around Luddenham. Getting a train in peak hour from Glenfield in the outer western suburbs to Wollie Creek, an inner-city suburb, takes 22 minutes as of now. The quadruplication of the East Hills line from Revesby to Wollie Creek has been great. If we continued that quadruplication as far as Glenfield, it would be even better. There are so many small-bore amendments like that that make a real difference to people's lives.¹⁰⁵

2.7 Mr Roydon Ng, Convenor, Restore T2 Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line advocated for the re-use of railway tracks not currently being utilised to establish north-south rail connections in Western Sydney. Mr Ng believes as an immediate solution 'we could re-use the direct track on Lidcombe Junction West for some direct services from Bankstown to Parramatta. That's a new north-south link. That's connecting Bankstown to Western Sydney'.¹⁰⁶

2.8 To encourage the early adoption of public transport use and capitalise on the investment into the Metro Western Sydney Airport, Western Sydney Airport Corporation Limited advocated for the modification of the existing Blue Mountains line timetable by the time of the airport's opening in 2026. They argued an opportunity exists to create faster, and more frequent services to the new airport by including St Marys on all stopping patterns for the Blue Mountains line services.¹⁰⁷

2.9 In a similar way, Mr Jeff Roorda, Director – Infrastructure and Project Delivery Services, Blue Mountains City Council, highlighted the untapped potential of the Sydney rail network, emphasising the need for improved integration with surrounding infrastructure to enhance accessibility and connectivity, not only in the Blue Mountains but across all serviced areas:

¹⁰³ Evidence, Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, 4 December 2023, p 47.

¹⁰⁴ Evidence, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 24.

¹⁰⁵ Evidence, Mr Matt Doherty, Committee Member, EcoTransit, 4 December 2023, p 59.

¹⁰⁶ Evidence, Mr Roydon Ng, Convenor, Restore T2 Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line, 4 December 2023, p 55.

¹⁰⁷ Submission 32, Western Sydney Airport, p 13.

When we start looking at the historical operations of the Sydney rail network, we believe that is a facility that has a lot more capacity but is limited by operational factors. Certainly for the Blue Mountains, we have that main corridor through the mountains that has enormous additional capacity if we could connect it to the surrounding infrastructure, like parking, like accessible transport and like connections to where the key destinations are. I think that's not just an issue for the Blue Mountains; it's an issue for all the areas of how you make better use of the existing corridors.¹⁰⁸

- 2.10** The Government expressed support for improving the existing public transport system in Western Sydney to alleviate capacity issues during peak hours, particularly through programs that are relatively inexpensive compared to other transport solutions. Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director Public Transport, Transport for NSW, detailed the Digital Systems Program which is in its early phases and aims to upgrade the signalling system, allowing more throughput on existing railway infrastructure. In addition, Mr Dessanti advised 'we slowly want to move to that more all-day, frequent type of service so that everyone is not trying to travel at eight o'clock in the morning or at 5.30 in the afternoon'.¹⁰⁹

First and last mile connectivity

- 2.11** Inquiry participants identified the lack of 'first and last mile' connectivity as another gap in the existing public transport network in Western Sydney. This means the first and last movement of people between public transportation hubs, especially railway stations, and their final destinations, often their homes or workplaces.¹¹⁰
- 2.12** For example, Mr Todd Carney, Mayor of Penrith, believes in his local government area there is 'difficult first or last mile in the movement of people...While residents may take the train, there is often no reliable bus services to take them the rest of the way or to the service itself'.¹¹¹ Likewise, Dr George Greiss, Mayor of Campbelltown placed the difficulty in last mile connections as one of the greatest frustrations for residents who commute outside of the local government area for employment purposes.¹¹²
- 2.13** Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, stated that difficulty in first and last mile connectivity between stations 'is something that we hear a lot about'.¹¹³ In their submission, the Dialogue explained that due to the low density of the region

¹⁰⁸ Evidence, Mr Jeff Roorda, Director – Infrastructure and Project Delivery Services, Blue Mountains City Council, 5 February 2024, p 15.

¹⁰⁹ Evidence, Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director Public Transport, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 43.

¹¹⁰ See for example: Submission 55, Penrith City Council, p 4; Submission 61, Campbelltown Health and Education Precinct, pp 2 and 5; Dr George Greiss, Mayor, Campbelltown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 44; Evidence, Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, 4 December 2023, p 49; Submission 39, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 9.

¹¹¹ Evidence, Mr Todd Carney, Mayor of Penrith City, 9 February 2024, p 25.

¹¹² Evidence, Dr George Greiss, Mayor, Campbelltown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 44.

¹¹³ Evidence, Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, 4 December 2023, p 49.

many residents live further than walking distance from a train station or direct bus line. They argued that with many suburban bus services 'meandering and inconsistent', those who wish to use heavy rail or a direct bus line are 'forced to drive and park at a station' or decide to 'drive all the way to their destination'.¹¹⁴

- 2.14** Ms Emma Bacon, Executive Director, Sweltering Cities also reported that due to heat effects in Western Sydney, the last kilometre has become a 'really big issue' for residents:

So they might live a couple of kay or a kilometre from Mount Druitt railway station, or places like that, but because it's so hard for them to walk in the heat and there's really unreliable public transport and there is no shelter or seat, that becomes an issue. It's prioritising, for really impacted communities, the last kilometre, whether through buses or on-demand travel...¹¹⁵

- 2.15** Campbelltown Health and Education Precinct argued that improving first and last mile connections, either through active transport or other non-private vehicle modes of transport, would significantly increase public transport use and provide seamless access to transit stations from homes or workplaces. They also highlighted that integrating essential amenities and services, such as childcare centres or grocery stores, into station developments is crucial for enhancing these connections and incentivising public transport use over car use.¹¹⁶

Inequitable public transport infrastructure and services

- 2.16** It was also expressed that there had been an inequitable distribution of infrastructure and services across Western Sydney compared to other parts of Greater Sydney. For example, Dr George Greiss, Chair, Mayoral Forum, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, was of the view that residents across Western Parkland City had 'suffered great inequity' in terms of transport infrastructure.¹¹⁷

- 2.17** As a result, Dr Greiss argued that 'few people are now located within 30 minutes of a metropolitan centre by public transport and even fewer have access to a bus stop within 400 metres of their home'.¹¹⁸

- 2.18** Noting there is an inequitable distribution of public transport between the east and west of Sydney, Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, Chief Executive Officer of Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) Ltd, expressed that residents of Western Sydney 'deserve' an equitable approach to the provision of transport infrastructure and services and anything less discriminates against those who have less opportunities:

...[T]he people of Western Sydney deserve a public transport network which, adjusted for density, is the same as that in the east; it is not that now. They deserve the same

¹¹⁴ Submission 39, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 3.

¹¹⁵ Evidence, Ms Emma Bacon, Executive Director, Sweltering Cities, p 34.

¹¹⁶ Submission 61, Campbelltown Health and Education Precinct, p 5.

¹¹⁷ Evidence, Dr George Greiss, Chair, Mayoral Forum, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, p 10.

¹¹⁸ Evidence, Dr George Greiss, Chair, Mayoral Forum, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, p 10.

density of heavy rail and metro railway lines and stations, the same density of bus routes and bus stops with the same regularity of services. Anything less discriminates against the residents of Western Sydney who, on average, have lesser educational, employment and recreational opportunities than the wealthier residents of the east.¹¹⁹

- 2.19** In discussions around funding mechanisms to support a balanced delivery of public transport infrastructure, the issue of equity was also raised. Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council suggested that as areas like Camden grow rapidly, the lack of equitable public transport infrastructure becomes a pressing issue. He highlighted that despite contributing taxes towards Sydney's rail services which encompasses 170 stations, Camden residents only have access to one railway station at Liverpool.¹²⁰
- 2.20** Mrs Alison Dench, a resident of Western Sydney, argued that there is inequity in infrastructure spending, with a predominant focus on motorways and roads over essential investments in heavy and light rail, footpaths, shared pathways, and cycle lanes, leading to a public infrastructure system 'skewed towards cars'.¹²¹

Barriers to public transport use across Western Sydney

- 2.21** This section examines the barriers, as highlighted by inquiry participants, that restrict residents use of the existing public transport system and encourage reliance on cars in Western Sydney. As noted earlier, Chapter 3 will examine some of the issues discussed in more detail.

Long travel times, infrequent or unreliable services, multiple interchanges

- 2.22** Various inquiry participants identified the long travel times, infrequent or unreliable services and multiple interchanges residents face within the existing public transport network in Western Sydney.¹²² To demonstrate, the figure below provides a comparison of the time taken to travel by car and public transport (including interchanges) to various locations from the Macarthur region.

¹¹⁹ Evidence, Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils, 4 December 2023, p 37.

¹²⁰ Evidence, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council, 9 February 2024, p 30.

¹²¹ Evidence, Mrs Alison Dench, Resident of Western Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 10.

¹²² See for example: Submission 21, Campbelltown City Council, pp 2-3; Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, pp 2-3; Submission 52, Centre for Western Sydney, pp 5-6; Submission 65, The Heart Foundation, pp 2-3.

Figure 5 Car and public transport times compared (Macarthur Region)**ENDEAVOUR CIRCUIT, HARRINGTON PARK (MACARTHUR REGION)**

Source: Submission 52, Centre for Western Sydney, p 3.

- 2.23** The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils acknowledged that whilst public transport services exist, they can be 'hard to access as stations are too far away from residential estates, buses and trains do not run frequently enough and even when there is a service, they take far too long given the distances covered, the number of stops and road congestion'.¹²³
- 2.24** These concerns were also demonstrated by witnesses travelling to the inquiry's hearings held in Western Sydney.¹²⁴ Mr Matt Gould, Mayor of Wollondilly Shire Council, noted that had he travelled by public transport from Wollondilly to the hearing at Campbelltown, it would've taken '3 and a half hours and involved two buses and three trains'.¹²⁵
- 2.25** Campbelltown City Council acknowledged a travel survey by Transport for NSW, showing that average bus travel times within the local government area are almost double that of driving (bus averaged 3 min 15 sec per km, driver vehicle 1 min 43 secs per km). The Council asserted this disparity continues to drive demand for car ownership, and therefore car dependency, increasing congestion, impacting the performance of the road network, in a 'self-perpetuating cycle'. This unhealthy cycle, they believe, requires a 'circuit-breaker commitment' from government to enhance the public transport services and improve the infrastructure and make public transport attractive to residents.¹²⁶
- 2.26** Ms Caecilia Roth, Senior Policy Officer, Family Planning Australia expressed workers are often facing infrequent services and long travel times when trying to commute to and from the organisation's site at Newington at various times throughout the day:

¹²³ Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 3.

¹²⁴ See for example: Evidence, Mr Todd Carney, Mayor, Penrith City, 9 February 2024, p 25 and Mr Matt Gould, Mayor, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 23.

¹²⁵ Evidence, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 23.

¹²⁶ Submission 21, Campbelltown City Council, p 3.

...[T]he bus services that link into some of the train stations like Auburn, Strathfield, Parramatta, are not always on time and they're not that frequent, so sometimes they might be only every 20 or 25 minutes, particularly after hours when we're—we have core office hours up to five but our clinics do run until eight on two evenings a week and on Saturdays, so it's less frequent after hours. People can spend quite a bit of time just waiting for connections, whether that's waiting for a bus or waiting for a connection then to the train station. ... [P]eople on their way to Strathfield station often missing a connection because of the traffic on Parramatta Road, and you're sitting on the bus waiting for that. So all of those things just add to the travel time and frustration with getting to and from our Newington site.¹²⁷

- 2.27** As a result of additional travel time and costs associated with relying on private vehicles instead of public transport, Ms Roth advised that a proportion of staff at the Newington site 'ended up moving on, leaving the organisation'.¹²⁸
- 2.28** Mr Sharath Mahendran, creator of Youtube channel Building Beautifully was of the view that some areas in Western Sydney are not benefitting from rail services due to the lack of frequent bus services. He explained: '...if you live in Marsden Park—during the day you need to wait half an hour to get to [Tallawong] metro station—you're not benefitting from that very frequent service because your bus isn't good enough'.¹²⁹
- 2.29** Various inquiry participants observed that residents are left with no alternative but to rely on private vehicles for transportation.¹³⁰

Affordability

- 2.30** It was argued that affordability of public transport can be a barrier to use particularly for those in areas of Western Sydney experiencing higher levels socio-economic disadvantage and/or limited access due to poor connectivity in the network.¹³¹ For example, Blacktown City Council, explained that for some residents in their local government area a multi-modal trip could consist of a bus trip to the rail station, followed by a bus trip to the destination, resulting in three fares being collected which could exceed \$15 per trip, \$30 per day or \$600 per month. The Council argued that affordability thresholds need to be considered and implemented.¹³²
- 2.31** Mrs Alison Dench, a resident of Western Sydney argued that public transport affordability 'can vary within Western Sydney due to the diversity of neighbourhoods and income levels.

¹²⁷ Evidence, Ms Caecilia Roth, Senior Policy Advisor, Family Planning Australia, 5 February 2024, p 27.

¹²⁸ Evidence, Ms Caecilia Roth, Senior Policy Advisor, Family Planning Australia, 5 February 2024, p 28.

¹²⁹ Evidence, Mr Sharath Mahendran, Creator, Building Beautifully, 5 February 2024, p 12.

¹³⁰ See for example: Evidence, Mrs Alison Dench, Resident of Western Sydney, 4 December 2024, p 55; Submission 39, Western Sydney Leadership dialogue, pp 5-7; Submission 33, Liverpool City Council, p 4.

¹³¹ See for example: Submission 41, Planning Institute of Australia, pp5-6; Submission 46, Blacktown City Council, p 7; Submission 54, Ms Ally Dench, p 14; Submission 52, The Centre for Western Sydney, pp 10-11.

¹³² Submission 46, Blacktown City Council, p 7.

Lower-income individuals and families find it more challenging to afford regular public transport fares, especially when fares are not proportionate to income'.¹³³

2.32 In a similar vein, Bus NSW argued that in order to promote a mode shift from private vehicle use there is 'a need to ensure that fares are attractive to lower income earners'.¹³⁴

2.33 The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils stressed that 'eligibility for concession fares remains a major barrier to people experiencing poverty and disadvantage to accessing the public transport network'.¹³⁵ To incentivise public transport use, some inquiry participants put forward recommendations to alleviate the costs for those taking multi-modal trips, travelling outside peak hours or for disadvantaged and vulnerable community members.¹³⁶ For example, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue recommended that the Government introduce geographically based Opal fare discounts to encourage public transport use 'in certain areas and at certain times of the day where there may be a demonstrable benefit to low-socioeconomic individuals and communities who may otherwise become socially isolated or forced into unsustainable car dependence'.¹³⁷

2.34 Mr Luke Turner, Executive Director, Policy & Advocacy, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, acknowledged fares are regulated by IPART, asserting that whilst 'there are limitations to discounts that can be offered, you have concession fares and off-peak discounts. We have seen through the pandemic and since then that price signals can be set to incentivise transport to particular areas at particular times of the day. I don't see why not'.¹³⁸

2.35 Notwithstanding the potential affordability benefits of fare discounts and subsidies for residents in Western Sydney, Mr Thomas Nance, Policy and Strategy Lead, Centre for Western Sydney argued that fare reductions and subsidies alone would not incentivise residents in the region to use public transport:

... [I]f we were to take away fares, would it mean that more people would be interested in catching public transport? At this point in time I would confidently say the answer would be no. For those who are already catching public transport it would be welcomed, particularly those who are paying significant amounts of money in their budget to get to work. Because we know it's more expensive to own and maintain a car—to put petrol in it, to insure it, to service it, et cetera. I think the fact that within the context of this cost-of-living crisis there are still a huge amount of motorists who haven't converted to public transport—I think we've got the answer in terms of additional reductions to fares driving more people towards public transport.¹³⁹

¹³³ Submission 54, Ms Ally Dench, p 14.

¹³⁴ Submission 40, BusNSW, p 6.

¹³⁵ Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 16.

¹³⁶ See for example: Submission 46, Blacktown City Council, Submission 40, BusNSW, p 6; Evidence, Mr Luke Turner, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 47.

¹³⁷ Submission 39, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 8.

¹³⁸ Evidence, Mr Luke Turner, Executive Director, Policy & Advocacy, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, 4 December 2023, p 47.

¹³⁹ Evidence, Mr Thomas Nance, Policy and Strategy Lead, Centre for Western Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 8.

Health, safety and access concerns

- 2.36** Various health, safety and access concerns were observed as limiting public transport use currently in Western Sydney. Of particular concern, was the health and safety concerns arising from long wait times at bus stops without adequate shelter and amenity.¹⁴⁰
- 2.37** For example, Ms Emma Bacon, Executive Director, Sweltering Cities, an organisation that has been tracking summer temperatures at bus stops, found that in Penrith, where ground temperatures can reach 50 degrees, 70 per cent of the more than 500 bus stops surveyed had no shade, shelter, or seating. Ms Bacon noted that 'the people of Penrith, whether they're going to a hospital, whether they're going to school, whether they're in an aged-care facility—all different areas are facing these extremely hot and in fact dangerous conditions just trying to get around their suburb'.¹⁴¹
- 2.38** According to Sweltering Cities, this has 'serious implications on the health and well-being of the public', which will be discussed later at paragraphs 2.60 to 2.61.¹⁴²
- 2.39** Mr Thomas Nance, Policy and Strategy Lead, Centre for Western Sydney highlighted the multifaceted challenges faced by parents in ensuring the safety and walkability of their children's school commutes, especially during the summer months:
- I know, as a parent—and parents across New South Wales and across the nation—I'm weighing up is it safe for my child to walk this route? Do they have to walk a different route? Is there too much traffic as they cross the road? I think there's a lot of factors at play both in terms of public transport usage but also walkability more broadly. But I do think temperature, particularly in summer, is one of those things. We need to look at how we design the physical infrastructure that supports public transport, like bus shelters and footpaths, that allows people with mobility issues to get there.¹⁴³
- 2.40** Local councils also raised safety concerns around public transport services in their local government area.¹⁴⁴ In particular, Blue Mountains City Council reported that young women, in the upper mountains area particularly, are experiencing sexual harassment around train stations. The Council called for 'messaging zero tolerance of sexual harassment or violence, adequate staffing and training of staff, lighting and safe places' to 'assist to keep people safe' as well as 'encourage people to use public transport'.¹⁴⁵
- 2.41** The delivery of bus shelters in Western Sydney is further explored in chapter 3.

¹⁴⁰ See for example: Submission 30, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd, pp 12-13; Submission 63, Sweltering Cities, pp 1-2; Submission 36, Committee for Sydney, p 2.

¹⁴¹ Evidence, Ms Emma Bacon, Executive Director, Sweltering Cities, 5 February 2024, p 30.

¹⁴² Submission 63, Sweltering Cities, p 1.

¹⁴³ Evidence, Mr Thomas Nance, Policy and Strategy Lead, Centre for Western Sydney, 5 February 2024, pp 5-6.

¹⁴⁴ Evidence, Ms Lisa Lake, Mayor, Cumberland City Council, 5 February 2024, p 15 and Submission 44, Blue Mountains City Council, p 9.

¹⁴⁵ Submission 44, Blue Mountains City Council, p 9.

Lack of cultural and linguistic inclusion

2.42 The Centre for Western Sydney reported there was a lack of cultural and linguistic inclusion on public transport services in Western Sydney, urging the Government to address this issue in order to 'enable participation in the community'.¹⁴⁶

2.43 The Western Sydney Community Forum also expressed this view, detailing the various barriers this cohort is facing:

Usage barriers can go from things such as discrimination or feeling culturally unsafe when using public transport to the absence of linguistically accessible signage and communications on public transport.¹⁴⁷

2.44 Mr Shrivankumar Guntuku, Manager, Policy and Programs, Western Sydney Community Forum, also stressed the importance of considering cultural and linguistic diversity of Western Sydney in transport planning to ensure accessibility across the network:

Without having these issues addressed for people who are coming to Western Sydney as part of the migration increase, however many bigger, innovative infrastructure things that we do for Western Sydney, they might not be as accessible as possible. Having that Western Sydney lens, with the multicultural language barrier and community safety views, is a significant issue for Western Sydney.¹⁴⁸

2.45 As a step towards addressing this barrier, Mr Thomas Nance, Policy and Strategy Lead, Centre for Western Sydney called for 'piloting programs where there are in-language announcements at train stations' as well as consideration into 'how we can match the diverse workforce within our transport system potentially to stations so they can deliver customer service in language as well'.¹⁴⁹

Impacts of the gaps in and barriers to public transport services and infrastructure in Western Sydney

2.46 As discussed above, there are various challenges limiting utilisation of Western Sydney's public transport network. It was widely acknowledged that due to these limitations a significant number of residents rely on private vehicles for transportation across Greater Sydney.¹⁵⁰

2.47 Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue (the Dialogue) asserted that residents within the outer areas of northwest and southwest Sydney have been 'grappling with worsening traffic conditions as congestion increases along with the rapid growth in population in these areas'.

¹⁴⁶ Submission 52, Centre for Western Sydney, p 4.

¹⁴⁷ Evidence, Dr Joshua Bird, Director, Policy and Programs, Western Sydney Community Forum, 4 December 2024, p 46

¹⁴⁸ Evidence, Shrivankumar Guntuku, Manager, Policy and Programs, Western Sydney Community Forum, 4 December 2024, p 50.

¹⁴⁹ Evidence, Mr Thomas Nance, Policy and Strategy Lead, Centre for Western Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 6.

¹⁵⁰ See for example: Submission 21, Campbelltown City Council, pp 2-3; Submission 68, Wollondilly City Council, pp 2-3; Submission 34, Western Sydney Community Forum, p 6.

The Dialogue was of the view a lack of efficient and accessible public transport alternatives has resulted in an 'entrenched over reliance on personal vehicles for residents, putting increased pressure on household budgets through tolls, fuel expenses, parking fees, and vehicle maintenance costs' as well as various other negative impacts.¹⁵¹

- 2.48** BusNSW stressed that the current reliance on cars in Western Sydney due to limited public transport options, 'contributes to congestion, air pollution, and increased infrastructure costs' with 'infrastructure decisions that prioritise car travel over public transport in turn lead[ing] to unequal access to job opportunities, education, and essential services, thereby exacerbating social inequality'.¹⁵²
- 2.49** Likewise, Campbelltown City Council observed the lack of transport infrastructure in the area 'continues to heighten congestion risk, sterilise otherwise productive land, limit liveability and environmental amenities, and condemns our residents to losing time in car transit'.¹⁵³
- 2.50** The following section examines the adverse social, economic, health and environmental impacts stemming from the region's poor public transport system and heavy reliance on cars.

Economic impacts

- 2.51** Vehicle-related expenses place a substantial financial burden on many Western Sydney households. As noted in Chapter 1, these costs average \$25,600 per year in Sydney, with this cost felt more acutely for those who own more than one vehicle and travel longer distances.¹⁵⁴
- 2.52** Some inquiry participants expressed that Western Sydney's existing public transport system and heavy reliance on cars negatively impacts the region's economic potential, factors for liveability and productivity.¹⁵⁵
- 2.53** This point was demonstrated by Dr George Greiss, Mayor of Campbelltown, who stressed congestion borne by car dependency inhibits the potential for increased density in city centres. He explained to accommodate traffic demand, an equivalent of 10 football fields' worth of grade car parking near the train station has been provided in the Campbelltown CBD, with the broader local government area providing over 56,000 square metres of land for car parking.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵¹ Submission 39, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 5.

¹⁵² Submission 40, BusNSW, p 5.

¹⁵³ Submission 21, Campbelltown City Council, p 8.

¹⁵⁴ See for example: Submission 24, Camden Council, p 13, Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 15; Submission 32, Fairfield City Council, p 8.

¹⁵⁵ See for example: Submission 21, Campbelltown City Council, p 6; Submission 39, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 6; Evidence, Dr George Greiss, Mayor, Campbelltown City Council, 4 December 2024, p 36; Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia NSW, p 22.

¹⁵⁶ Evidence, Dr George Greiss, Mayor, Campbelltown City Council, 4 December 2024, p 36.

2.54 Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue asserted that continued dependence on cars in the region could 'cause deterioration in the amenity and destination appeal, resulting in challenges to the attraction of skilled workers'.¹⁵⁷

2.55 The job growth expected from Western Sydney Airport was discussed, with the Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils expressing that the existing public transport network is limiting employment opportunities arising from construction of the new airport for residents within the region:

The ridiculous reality is that even now, there are a significant number of jobs being offered during the construction phase of the airport, but it is impossible for the young people who lack a license and/or motor vehicle who chronically need those jobs to get to and from the job site.¹⁵⁸

Social impacts

2.56 The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils explored the consequences of limited public transport access and its role in fostering social exclusion. The Parks highlighted the broader implications of social exclusion, noting that it affects the individuals directly involved but also imposes costs on the community:

...[P]ublic transport is also not just about people on seats, it's about which people can get on the seats, and how much their life can be changed through improved mobility and inclusion. Social exclusion creates costs for both the excluded person and also for the wider community, with those who are socially excluded commonly having a higher risk of being unemployed, poorer mental and physical health, being less socially connected and some are more likely to engage in crime and/or substance abuse.¹⁵⁹

2.57 Discussing the impact of transport services on issues of social equity, the Heart Foundation stated that the availability and quality of transport has a 'direct impact' on social equity as 'people's lives are directly affected by the accessibility to amenities, destinations and services, as well as transport affordability and options to access services'.¹⁶⁰ Likewise, Family Planning Australia noted the lack of public transport service, particularly to its Newington site, significantly impacts individuals and the community's ability to access essential reproductive and sexual healthcare.¹⁶¹

2.58 Furthermore, Mrs Alison Dench, a resident of Western Sydney argued existing transport options 'disproportionately favour affluent areas', exacerbating the socio-economic divide within the region.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷ Submission 39, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 6.

¹⁵⁸ Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 5.

¹⁵⁹ See for example: Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 14 and Submission 61, Campbelltown Health and Education Precinct, p 4.

¹⁶⁰ Submission 65, The Heart Foundation, p 3.

¹⁶¹ Submission 22, Family Planning Australia, p 2.

¹⁶² Evidence, Mrs Alison Dench, Resident of Western Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 11.

2.59 The Government acknowledged that there is a crucial role for transport to play in enabling social equity in Western Sydney. However, it was also recognised 'there is a lot of work ahead of us over many years', alongside the challenge to deliver on the competing needs for communities across the Western Sydney and the State.¹⁶³

Health impacts

2.60 Sweltering Cities noted that residents of Western Sydney face considerable health risks due to the region's prevalence to extreme heat. They asserted that the absence of sufficient cooling infrastructure and shaded areas at public transport stops, along with factors like age, disability, and economic challenges, heightens these risks.¹⁶⁴

2.61 According to reports from Sweltering Cities' members in Western Sydney, the simple act of waiting at a bus stop without shelter on a hot day can result in dehydration, sunburn, and extreme fatigue.¹⁶⁵ In addition to physical health impacts, Ms Emma Bacon, Executive Director at the organisation, explained residents are also raising mental health concerns:

I spoke to a woman with a young child who had her daughter on 1 January. She told me about the incredible anxiety she felt of taking her daughter in Penrith with her baby strapped to her chest on a 40-degree day, waiting for the bus, and the concern she had for her daughter's health and safety.¹⁶⁶

2.62 The impact of traffic congestion on residents physical and mental well-being was also observed. The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils stated that congestion on the roads is leading to 'increased stress from long periods spent sitting sedentary in cars on congested roads', 'obesity' and a 'far higher rate of serious health problems impacting mental health and life satisfaction'.¹⁶⁷

2.63 Reflecting on the region's health challenges, inquiry participants considered how car dependency and its intersection with socioeconomic factors contribute to an environment that hinders healthy living. For example, Campbelltown Health and Education Precinct (CHEP) asserted that the reliance on cars, coupled with issues like limited access to healthy food and socio-economic determinants of health, creates an environment that makes it hard for people to maintain a healthy lifestyle.¹⁶⁸

2.64 The Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue observed that when considered together with anticipated population growth over the next twenty years, the negative health impacts associated with limited public transport, will create an unsustainable burden on health services, impacting the region's productivity and the socioeconomic well-being of its residents.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶³ Evidence, Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 35.

¹⁶⁴ Submission 63, Sweltering Cities, p 1.

¹⁶⁵ Submission 63, Sweltering Cities, p 1.

¹⁶⁶ Evidence, Ms Emma Bacon, Executive Director, Sweltering Cities, 5 February 2024, p 30.

¹⁶⁷ Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Council, p 23.

¹⁶⁸ Submission 61, Campbelltown Health and Education Precinct, p 3.

¹⁶⁹ Submission 39, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 7.

- 2.65** The Government acknowledged that 'physical inactivity not only can lead to poor health outcomes, but also costs around \$20 billion in lost productivity each year'.¹⁷⁰

Transport sector emissions and urban heat island effect

- 2.66** The transport sector's emissions and urban heat island effect in Western Sydney, particularly as a result of high car dependence and increase traffic congestion, was discussed by inquiry participants. Discussions also highlighted the role public transport plays in reducing urban heat impacts on the environment. For example, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, stated that the higher emissions from traffic congestion leads to worsening air quality and health related issues for Western Sydney residents.¹⁷¹
- 2.67** Blacktown City Council, which has declared a climate emergency, emphasised its goal to reduce the city's carbon emissions by '40 per cent by 2040'. The Council stated that reaching this target is contingent on enhancing public transport.¹⁷²
- 2.68** The region's car reliance and its contribution to the urban heat island effect in Western Sydney was also discussed by Campbelltown City Council who observed that the heavy reliance on cars can exacerbate this issue within the area.¹⁷³
- 2.69** Ms Harri Bancroft, Policy Manager – Mobility, Committee for Sydney, noted the urban heat island effect within Western Sydney, stating that 'we need to make sure that [transport] routes are as cool as possible'.¹⁷⁴
- 2.70** Likewise, the Government's *Future Transport Strategy 2022* acknowledged transport's emissions in New South Wales, particularly those from general traffic. They reported that by 2030, the transport sector is projected to be the largest single source of emissions due to increasing emissions from general traffic, heavy vehicles, aviation and shipping.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁰ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 15.

¹⁷¹ Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 15.

¹⁷² Evidence, Mr Kerry Robinson OAM, Chief Executive Officer, Blacktown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 37.

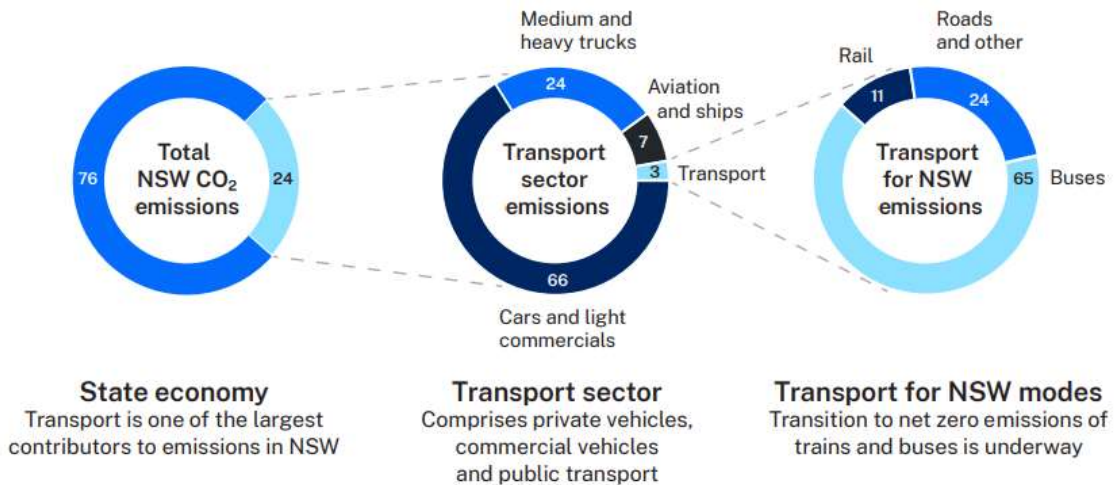
¹⁷³ Submission 21, Campbelltown City Council, p 2.

¹⁷⁴ Evidence, Ms Harri Bancroft, Policy Manager: Mobility, 9 February 2024, p 16.

¹⁷⁵ Transport for NSW, *Future Transport Strategy*, 2022, p 74.

2.71 The following figure details transport sector emissions as of 2022.

Figure 6 Transport sector emissions



Source: *Future Transport Strategy 2022*, p 74.

2.72 To that end, the Government has developed a subsidiary target for the transport sector, with a commitment to net zero transport operations by 2035, consistent with the NSW Climate Change Policy Framework and the 2016 Paris Agreement goal of limiting global heating to 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2100.¹⁷⁶

2.73 According to the *Future Transport Strategy 2022*, Sydney Metro, Sydney Trains and urban NSW TrainLink services are already powered by 100 per cent green electricity. Under the strategy, the Government introduced the Zero Emissions Bus program, with a plan to transition the State's 8000 gas and diesel bus fleet to zero emission buses by 2047.¹⁷⁷

2.74 Mr Matt Threlkeld, Executive Director, BusNSW, speaking to the delivery of the Government's Zero Emissions Bus program thus far, emphasised that there is significant work still to be done:

I think the last count that I saw was just over 100 in Greater Sydney. When you look at the Government's plan to transition 8,000 buses by 2047—and that's across the State—then, yes, there's a lot of work ahead of us in terms of that transition process.¹⁷⁸

2.75 As a step towards addressing the lack of bus services in Western Sydney, BusNSW urged the Government to consider reallocation of the initial tranche of zero emission buses in order to 'promote a fairer distribution of this innovative technology, with a particular focus on extending its advantages to Western Sydney'.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ Transport for NSW, *Future Transport Strategy*, 2022, p 74.

¹⁷⁷ Transport for NSW, *Future Transport Strategy*, 2022, p 75. See also: Transport for NSW, *Zero Emissions Bus Program*, <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/current-projects/zero-emission-buses>

¹⁷⁸ Evidence, Mr Matt Threlkeld, Executive Director, BusNSW, 5 February 2024, p 38.

¹⁷⁹ Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, p 7.

Benefits of an improved public transport network

- 2.76** It was commonly acknowledged by inquiry participants, such as local councils, businesses, residents, and peak body organisations that well-developed and connected public transport infrastructure and services offer significant economic, social, health, and economic benefits to Western Sydney.¹⁸⁰
- 2.77** Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc. asserted that maximising public transport ridership has intertwined and significant social, economic and environmental benefits for Western Sydney, noting:
- environmentally, it reduces energy consumption per passenger-kilometre compared to single-occupant cars, leading to lower greenhouse emissions and air pollution, while also mitigating urban sprawl and habitat loss
 - economically, it broadens access to work, education, and training, enhancing productivity and lessening dependency on welfare, with the overall operational and infrastructure costs being lower than those associated with the extensive use of cars.
 - socially, good public transport service ensures equitable access to employment, education, services, and social activities, benefiting those who may not have the ability to drive or own a car, thus fostering inclusivity and community cohesion.¹⁸¹
- 2.78** The Heart Foundation argued that the increased provision of, and enhanced accessibility to, public transport improves population health by facilitating physical activity, leading to healthcare cost savings.¹⁸²
- 2.79** In relation to road safety benefits of public transport, the Australasian College of Road Safety pointed to research that highlights a mode shift from private vehicle to public transport (i.e., train, light rail, or bus) for commuting would reduce the number of, and severity of crashes. They noted that better public transport access and coverage will also 'reduce the incidence of risky driving behaviours, such as inattention, drink and drug driving'.¹⁸³

Incorporating social, health, economic and environmental outcomes into public transport decisions

- 2.80** Noting the adverse outcomes for residents without adequate public transport in Western Sydney, inquiry participants urged the Government to include the socio-economic and health

¹⁸⁰ See for example: Submission 20, Australasian College of Road Safety, p 3; Submission 24, Camden Council, p 14; Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 10, 13; Submission 31, Canterbury-Bankstown Council, p 1; Submission 38, Leamac Property Group, p 4; Submission 41, Planning Institute of Australia, p 5.

¹⁸¹ Submission 59, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc., p 4.

¹⁸² Submission 65, The Heart Foundation, p 2.

¹⁸³ Submission 20, Australasian College of Road Safety, p 3. See also: Evidence, Mr Michael Timms, Co-Chair NSW Chapter, Australasian College of Road Safety, 5 February 2024, pp 30-31.

benefits, particularly to those in disadvantaged areas, when conducting a cost-benefit analysis for public transport projects in the region.¹⁸⁴

- 2.81** Mrs Alison Dench, a resident of Western Sydney argued the cost-benefit analysis of public transport projects needed to include the 'social impacts and implications for us to see what's of more benefit and where the best bang for buck is going to be'.¹⁸⁵
- 2.82** Mrs Dench added there are 'tangible socio-economic benefits' of smaller public transport projects in transport-disadvantaged, urban-fringe suburbs, such as lower crime rates, increased employment, improved health outcomes and enhanced social inclusion, declaring it is imperative that such benefits are factored into cost-benefit analyses of public transport projects.¹⁸⁶
- 2.83** Highlighting studies that indicate if local bus services carry just eight or nine passengers hourly, the societal benefits outweigh operational costs, the Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils argued that enhancing public transport can yield significant societal benefit. On that basis, they also urged the Government to factor these broader benefits into the cost-benefit analyses of public transport projects.¹⁸⁷
- 2.84** Ms Julie Walton, Convenor, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc., highlighted the need to reconsider the 'malignant influence' of benefit-cost ratios (BCRs) in transport and infrastructure planning and investments, drawing attention to Wales' decision to move away from BCRs as it was 'leading them to increase the amount of carbon dioxide they were pumping into the atmosphere and, too, causing greater disparities in the welfare of groups in their communities'.¹⁸⁸
- 2.85** Ms Walton pointed to Infrastructure Australia's 2018 report, *Outer Urban Public Transport: Improving accessibility in lower-density areas*, which noted the scarcity of public transport in outer urban areas but concluded that the BCRs do not justify investment in these areas. This stance, Ms Walton argued, has led to a preference for investments in areas with better BCRs that are already well-served by public transport.¹⁸⁹
- 2.86** Ms Walton along with Ms Harri Bancroft, Policy Manager – Mobility, Committee for Sydney both advocated for reevaluating the use of BCRs to ensure that transport planning and

¹⁸⁴ See for example: Mrs Alison Dench, Resident of Western Sydney, 5 February 2024, pp 10 and 12; Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 14 and Evidence, Mr Luke Turner, Executive Director, Policy and Advocacy, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, 4 December 2024, p 45.

¹⁸⁵ Evidence, Mrs Alison Dench, Resident of Western Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 12.

¹⁸⁶ Evidence, Mrs Alison Dench, Resident of Western Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 10.

¹⁸⁷ Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 14.

¹⁸⁸ Evidence, Ms Julie Walton, Convenor, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc., 9 February 2024, pp 21-22.

¹⁸⁹ Evidence, Ms Julie Walton, Convenor, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc., 9 February 2024, pp 21-22.

investments better meet community needs and supports equitable access to public transport, regardless of an area's current demand or density.¹⁹⁰

Committee comment

- 2.87** The committee acknowledges there are significant gaps within Western Sydney's existing public transport network limiting connectivity across the region. The evidence reveals a consensus among stakeholders that there is a critical need to improve interconnectivity throughout the region.
- 2.88** The committee notes the diverse perspectives on how to use rail and bus services in way that would best serve the current and future needs of Western Sydney. A more detailed discussion on these issues is in chapter 3.
- 2.89** The evidence indicates that there is an inequitable provision of transport options and infrastructure across Sydney, with Western Sydney experiencing particular disadvantage. The inequity experienced within rapidly growing areas in the southwest is concerning. The committee finds that there is an inequitable provision of transport options and infrastructure in Western Sydney. This is particularly the case to new growth areas in southwest Sydney, leaving many people without adequate access to jobs and essential services and entrenching socio-economic barriers experienced in some areas.

Finding 1

There is an inequitable provision of transport options and infrastructure in Western Sydney. This is particularly the case to new growth areas in southwest Sydney, leaving many people without adequate access to jobs and essential services and entrenching socio-economic barriers experienced in some areas.

- 2.90** The committee recognises the barriers impeding use of the current public transport system. This includes extended travel times, unreliable services, a lack of transport options, numerous interchanges, unaffordability, and limited accessibility. Such barriers contribute to an overreliance on private vehicles, increased traffic congestion, negative environmental impacts, and entrenched socio-economic disadvantage.
- 2.91** The committee notes suggestions from inquiry participants for there to be increased cultural and linguistic inclusivity measures across the public transport network. A review of such measures is timely, particularly given the diverse demographics that comprise Western Sydney. It is therefore recommended that the Government ensure culturally and linguistically inclusive measures are in place across public transport services in Western Sydney.

¹⁹⁰ Evidence, Ms Julie Walton, Convenor, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc., 9 February 2024, pp 21-22 and Evidence, Ms Harri Bancroft, Policy Manager – Mobility, Committee for Sydney, 9 February 2024, p 22.

Recommendation 1

That the Government ensure culturally and linguistically inclusive measures are in place across public transport services in Western Sydney.

- 2.92** The committee recognises the significant social, economic, environmental, and health impacts arising from inadequate public transport in Western Sydney. The committee notes the views of inquiry participants that over-reliance on private vehicles has led to increased traffic congestion, financial burdens on households, and limited access to employment and essential services. Environmentally, this reliance contributes to higher emissions and urban heat, while health impacts include increased stress, physical inactivity, and exposure to extreme heat conditions.
- 2.93** Given these impacts and the need to ensure the broader benefits of improved public transport are achieved, the committee recommends that the NSW Government's cost-benefit analyses of public transport projects comprehensively include social, economic and health outcomes in its assessment.
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Recommendation 2

That the Government's cost-benefit analyses of public transport projects comprehensively include social, economic and health outcomes in its assessment.

Chapter 3 Key Western Sydney public transport services and projects

This chapter examines key public transport services and projects of relevance to Western Sydney. It begins with a discussion of rail services and projects, namely heavy rail, light rail and metro rail. Next, various transport-related matters important to the new Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis are discussed. The provision of bus services and amenities in Western Sydney is then examined followed by discussions about ferries and then active transport. The chapter makes various recommendations that aim to optimise Western Sydney's key public transport services and projects against measures including interconnectivity, reliability, frequency, amenity and accessibility.

Rail services and projects

- 3.1** This section covers the key issues raised by inquiry participants about rail services and projects in Western Sydney. An overview of the key projects as considered by this inquiry is provided at chapter 1.

Distance between and number of stops – metro services

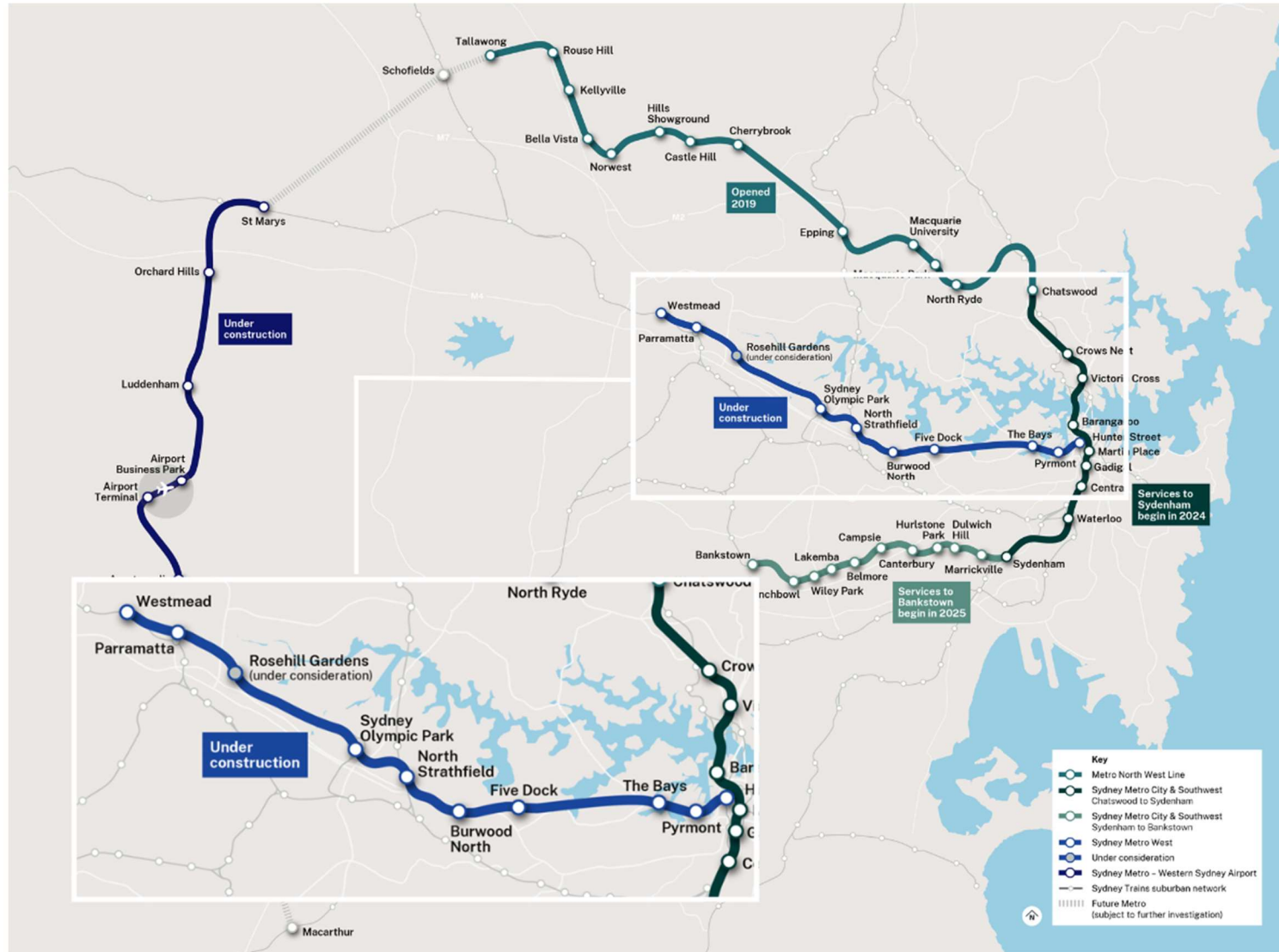
- 3.2** A major concern raised regarding key rail projects for Western Sydney is the distance between and number of stops for the Metro West and for the confirmed section of the Metro Western Sydney Airport from the airport to St Marys.

Metro West

- 3.3** With regard to Metro West, concerns were raised that, as originally planned, this metro involved too great a gap – of 6 or 7 kilometres¹⁹¹ – between the Parramatta and Sydney Olympic Park stations. A map of the metro line follows which includes a station at Rosehill Gardens that is currently under consideration by the Government.

¹⁹¹ Evidence, Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia NSW, 4 December 2023, p 22.

Figure 7 sentSydney Metro West (as of April 2024)



Source: Sydney Metro, Planning for future extensions, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/planning-future-extensions>

3.4 Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia NSW, argued that the gap between Parramatta and Sydney Olympic Park was based on an outdated idea of moving passengers as quickly as possible between the Parramatta and Sydney CBDs instead of supporting and connecting new employment and housing centres outside these existing CBDs and creating 'cities within cities'.¹⁹²

3.5 In a similar vein, Mr Colin Schroeder, Committee Member, EcoTransit Sydney, stated that Metro West had been designed for fast travel between the Central River City and the Sydney CBD 'but it doesn't provide the utility of more stations and allow for more development'.¹⁹³

3.6 Mr David Borger, Executive Director, Metropolitan NSW, Business Western Sydney agreed, arguing for an extra station or more for the Metro West. He stated that this would offer greater benefits to Western Sydney than if the Parramatta to Olympic Park gap were to remain:

I think the key deficiency in the Metro West as it's currently planned is that there is a very large gap between Parramatta and Sydney Olympic Park. I think the rationale for the short travel time between Sydney and Parramatta is a way of inducing job growth....We think that having a station at Rosehill or Camellia and possibly other stations would allow Western Sydney to capture more of the benefits of Metro West...[A]dditional stations...would provide opportunities for housing, for investment, for uplift – and that would benefit the broader area more than no stations between Olympic Park and Parramatta.¹⁹⁴

3.7 Ms Lisa Lake, Mayor of Cumberland City Council, stated that the Council supported further stations between Parramatta and Olympic Park and suggested Silverwater contending that this 'would alleviate some of the transport congestion down at Lidcombe where the interchange is'.¹⁹⁵ Family Planning Australia, which has clinics at Penrith and Newington argued that Newington should be included as a station on the Metro West Line and that 'omitting Newington as a Sydney Metro West station will have significant impacts on individuals and the community's ability to access essential reproductive and sexual healthcare'.¹⁹⁶

3.8 Inquiry participants also stressed that decisions on this matter needed to be made promptly. In arguing for two extra stations at Camellia and Newington, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta stated that even if the stations are not fully constructed at the time the Metro West is opened, fit-out infrastructure should have been completed to maintain the option of activating extra stations later on:

...we don't want people sitting around in 120 years, looking back and saying "We should've built those two or three railway stations in that peninsula when we had the chance and now we've lost the opportunity forever...We don't want to be here in 30,

¹⁹² Evidence, Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia NSW, 4 December 2023, p 22.

¹⁹³ Evidence, Mr Colin Schroeder, Committee Member, EcoTransit Sydney, 4 December 2023, p 59.

¹⁹⁴ Evidence, Mr David Borger, Executive Director, Metropolitan NSW, Business Western Sydney, 4 December 2023, pp 3 and 6-7.

¹⁹⁵ Evidence, Ms Lisa Lake, Mayor, Cumberland City Council, 5 February 2024, p 15.

¹⁹⁶ Submission 22, Family Planning Australia, p 2.

50, 100 years time saying "If only we had provided those station boxes". My submission to the inquiry around Metro West was that those boxes should be planned for and provided now. And even if they're not fully constructed, the fit-out infrastructure should be there if the Government wanted to come in and fill them in later...¹⁹⁷

- 3.9** In a similar vein, Mr David Harding, Executive Director, Policy and Advocacy, Business NSW indicated that decisions regarding stations for the Metro West should be made now because when an automated metro line has been built and the tunnel is complete it is nearly impossible to retrofit a station.¹⁹⁸
- 3.10** In discussing some of the locations put forward by stakeholders for extra stations between Parramatta and Sydney Olympic Park – namely Rosehill, Camellia and Silverwater – Mr David Borger, Executive Director, Metropolitan NSW, Business Western Sydney also noted that significant cost would be involved and that 'there would need to be significant uplift around those stations in order to capture some of the value and pay for some of the cost'.¹⁹⁹ For example, Camellia is an industrial area and de-contamination work would be necessary while Silverwater is a significant employment area where residential investment would be needed to fund the station.²⁰⁰
- 3.11** In February 2024 the Government announced that Sydney Metro would investigate two potential additional stations to the west of Olympic Park, including one at Rosehill Gardens which could support a significant increase in housing.²⁰¹

Metro Western Sydney Airport

- 3.12** With regard to Metro Western Sydney Airport concerns were raised that there are not enough stations on the confirmed section from the Aerotropolis to St Marys.
- 3.13** Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia NSW stated that while there are six stations along the line, there should be eight.²⁰² Similarly, Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) Ltd commented that the benefits of the metro for local residents and businesses would be limited if it does not include enough stations:

¹⁹⁷ Evidence, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta, 5 February 2024, p 24.

¹⁹⁸ Evidence, Mr David Harding, Executive Director, Policy and Advocacy, Business NSW, 4 December 2023, p 5.

¹⁹⁹ Evidence, Mr David Borger, Executive Director, Metropolitan NSW, Business Western Sydney, 4 December 2023, 4 December 2023, p 4.

²⁰⁰ See Evidence, Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia (NSW), 4 December 2023, p 23; City of Parramatta, *Precinct Planning Camellia*, <https://www.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/vision/precinct-planning/camellia>; and Evidence, Mr Borger, Business Western Sydney, 4 December 2023, pp 8 and 9.

²⁰¹ Sydney Metro, *Sydney Metro West Project Update*, (7 February 2024), https://www.sydneymetro.info/sites/default/files/2024-02/Project%20Update%20Sydney%20Metro%20West_2.pdf.

²⁰² Evidence, Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia (NSW), 4 December 2023, p 24.

The problem we have with it is that, if you put railway stations at the same spacing you have at the link between St Marys and the airport, the utility of that line is greatly diminished from the Western Sydney residents' and business' perspective. People don't build homes along a railway line, believe it or not...They build homes around railway stations, places that give them access to the transport capability.²⁰³

- 3.14** Mr Casuscelli indicated that the decision on the number of stations was based on budgetary considerations rather than the number that were actually needed. He stressed in this regard that local connectivity is just as important as quick travel between major centres. Speaking about the extension of the confirmed section of the Metro Western Sydney Airport line north to Tallawong and south to Macarthur, Mr Casuscelli, highlighted the line's capacity to have stations at two-kilometre spacings, resulting in 30 new stations and communities that 'could actually accommodate the growth of Western Sydney'.²⁰⁴

Interconnectivity across Western Sydney and beyond

- 3.15** Better interconnectivity across Western Sydney to encourage investment, create local jobs, reduce car dependency and facilitate the needs of local people to access nearby services and leisure facilities was a key issue for inquiry participants, particularly in the wake of large population growth. There was evidence that much public transport focus to date has been on east-west linkages, connecting Parramatta to the Eastern Harbour City and that public transport connecting Western Sydney's commercial precincts with each other is lacking.²⁰⁵

- 3.16** In this vein, Mr Thomas Nance, Policy and Strategy Lead, Centre for Western Sydney stressed that interconnectivity in Western Sydney is essential for productivity and prosperity and that in its absence economic opportunities, in particular those created by the new Western Sydney Airport, could be squandered. He stated:

...in Western Sydney...we're on the cusp of an economic boom led by Western Sydney Airport and increased investment by industry in the region. If we don't deliver a public transport system that gets people where they need to go, we are at risk of missing this generational opportunity.²⁰⁶

- 3.17** However, there was also support for continuing to grow rail connections between Western Sydney and wider Sydney, especially to fully realise the benefits of the new Western Sydney Airport, due to open in 2026, and discussed in further detail below.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ Evidence, Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 15.

²⁰⁴ Evidence, Mr Casuscelli, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 15.

²⁰⁵ See for example: Evidence, Mr David Harding, Executive Director, Policy and Advocacy, 4 December 2023, p 2; Evidence, Mr Casuscelli, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 11; Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, p 14.

²⁰⁶ Evidence, Mr Thomas Nance, Policy and Strategy Lead, Centre for Western Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 2.

²⁰⁷ See for example: Evidence, Mr Simon Hickey, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport, 9 February 2024, p 4; Evidence, Mr Colin Schroeder,

North-south connectivity and extensions to Metro Western Sydney Airport

- 3.18** Many inquiry participants emphasised the importance of a north-south public transport connection within Western Sydney.²⁰⁸ Mrs Alison Dench, a resident of Western Sydney, explained that such a connection could form a basic spine from which further connections could flourish:

[If] you've got that spine going up from north-south you can then [have] tentacles integrat[ing] people moving within. Not everyone in southwest Sydney travels to Sydney. Not everybody goes there every day. We travel within, we work within and around and we don't have those networks or connections like eastern Sydney...build that spine and other things will come as a result of that.²⁰⁹

- 3.19** Against this background, many inquiry participants advocated proceeding with extensions to the Metro Western Sydney Airport. The Western Sydney City Deal included a commitment to investigate a north-south rail link from Schofields to Macarthur – as well as a rail link to connect Leppington to the Aerotropolis.²¹⁰ Accordingly, the 2023-24 New South Wales Budget committed funding to develop two business cases to consider extensions to this metro (between St Marys and Tallawong, via Schofields and Marsden Park; and between Bradfield and Leppington/Glenfield, and Bradfield and Campbelltown/Macarthur).²¹¹
- 3.20** It is understood from the Government that the Bradfield to Campbelltown/Macarthur connection that is under examination would proceed via Oran Park and Narellan.²¹² Sydney Metro has advised that, when complete, the business cases will inform the Government's consideration of investment priorities for future metro extensions.²¹³ A map of the Metro Western Sydney Airport line follows, including plans for the abovementioned extensions.

Committee Member, EcoTransit, 4 December 2023, p 60; and Evidence, Mr Mick Owens, General Manager, Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd, 4 December 2024, p 28. These witnesses stressed the importance of links between the new airport and Leppington which would in turn create a link with the Sydney CBD and Sydney Airport.

²⁰⁸ See for example: Evidence, Mr Charles Casuscelli, Chief Executive Officer, WSROC, 4 December 2024, p 11; Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney Parkland Council, 4 December 2023, p 14; Evidence, Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, UDIA, 4 December 2023, p 26; and Evidence, Mr Mick Owens, General Manager, Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 28.

²⁰⁹ Evidence, Mrs Alison Dench, Resident of Western Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 13.

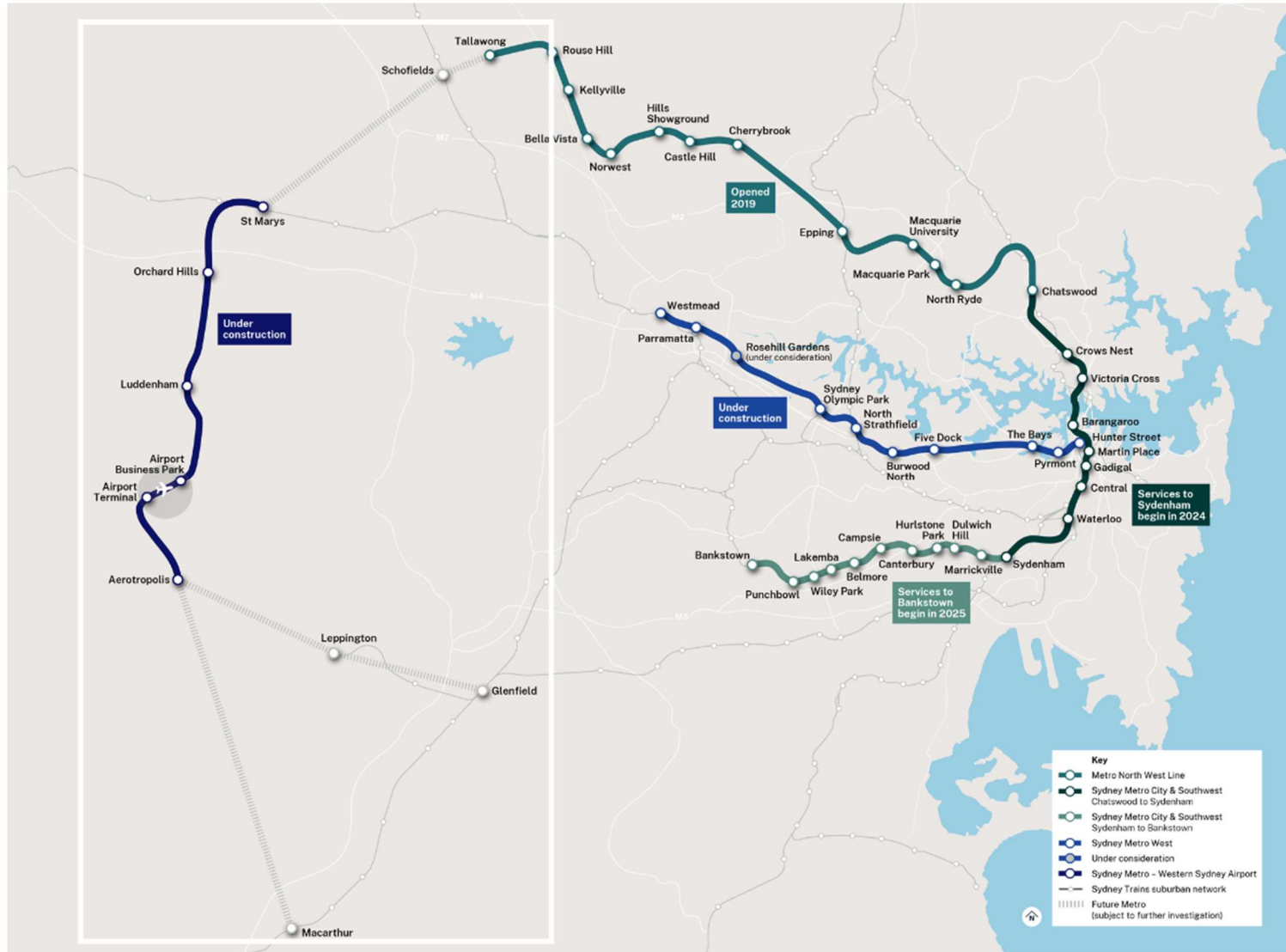
²¹⁰ Western Sydney City Deal Partners, *Western Sydney City Deal Annual Progress Report 2021*, <https://www.wpca.sydney/our-region/the-western-sydney-aerotropolis/#:~:text=The%20Western%20Sydney%20Aerotropolis%20is,in%20the%20Western%20Parkland%20City>, p 17.

²¹¹ Sydney Metro, *Planning for future extensions*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/planning-future-extensions>.

²¹² Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 24; see also Evidence, Ms McPhee, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Customer Operations and Outcomes, Sydney Metro, 9 February 2024, p 37.

²¹³ Sydney Metro, *Planning for future extensions*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/planning-future-extensions>.

Figure 8 Metro Western Sydney Airport and plans for future extensions (as of April 2024)



Source: Sydney Metro, Planning for future extensions, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/planning-future-extensions>

Inquiry participants argued that stage one of the metro from the Aerotropolis at Bradfield to St Marys, which is currently being constructed, is of limited use on its own. For example, Mr Mick Owens, General Manager, Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd characterised it as 'a bit of spur line'.²¹⁴ He stated that while it is a good start it only really allows people who live in the immediate area to access the airport and that if the possible extensions were to go ahead there would be far greater benefits for Western Sydney:

...the extension from Bradfield to Leppington – that's really important for the network and for greater access for...wider Sydney; then also from Bradfield to continue on with the north-south line and commit to stage two, and that's to get it to Oran Park and also down to Macarthur. That's when you really see the benefits of the whole system coming together and to capitalize on the infrastructure that's been done for Western Sydney.²¹⁵

3.21 Mr Simon Hickey, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport stated that all potential extensions to the metro were priorities and he noted some of the benefits of each. He stated that the Leppington/Glenfield connection would connect Sydney's two airports and allow people to travel via one connection to the Sydney CBD. In relation to extending the metro to Macarthur, Mr Hickey noted this would be one of the highest growth corridors in the next decade and such an extension would connect this area with job opportunities at the airport and Aerotropolis. With regard to an extension from St Marys to Tallawong Mr Hickey noted this would allow connections with local job opportunities in the Blacktown area and further afield to Macquarie Park.²¹⁶

3.22 While the Leppington connection with the new airport would be useful to link the new airport with Sydney Airport and the Sydney CBD, Mr David Borger from Business Western Sydney also noted that it too would be important for connectivity within Western Sydney, linking people with valuable job opportunities and other benefits. He stated:

There are a whole bunch of links that would improve access to jobs and access to the good things in life. One of them would be extending the airport metro to Leppington and that would then allow the south-west to access the airport in a way that they won't be able to when it opens.²¹⁷

3.23 Local councils also identified the extensions to the metro as absolute priorities for interconnectivity in Western Sydney and local jobs. Mr Ben Taylor appearing in his capacity as Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, which represents the eight councils that make up Western Parkland City, stated that a north-south connection from Macarthur through the airport to Schofields was the priority as was the Leppington connection to the Aerotropolis 'as a hub for us in terms of future jobs'.²¹⁸

²¹⁴ Evidence, Mr Mick Owens, Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd, 4 December 2024, p 28.

²¹⁵ Evidence, Mr Mick Owens, Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd, 4 December 2024, p 28. See also Evidence, Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, Chief Executive Officer, WSROC, 4 December 2023, p 13; and Evidence, Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, UDIA, 4 December 2023, p 26.

²¹⁶ Evidence, Mr Simon Hickey, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport, 9 February 2024, 9 February 2024, pp 4-5.

²¹⁷ Evidence, Mr David Borger, Executive Director, Business Western Sydney, 4 December 2023, p 2.

²¹⁸ Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, p 14.

- 3.24** Mr Kerry Robinson OAM, Chief Executive Officer, Blacktown City Council, indicated that joining St Marys to Tallawong via metro was critical and would have major benefits for affected residents – this corridor must be confirmed and construction started. He stated that 'this link will provide access for residents of suburbs with some of the lowest socio-economic indicators in New South Wales to the high value jobs and educational opportunities of Sydney Business Park, Norwest and Macquarie Park'.²¹⁹
- 3.25** In a similar vein, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council stressed the importance of extending the metro from Bradfield through Oran Park and Narellan and down to Macarthur; and of extending the metro east from Bradfield to Glenfield and Leppington. He stated that Camden is the fastest growing local government area in Australia but that it also has a growing jobs deficit that can only be fixed with better interconnectivity for Western Sydney. He further stated: 'Camden desperately needs private investment in employment-generating developments and this will only occur when we have metro rail connections'.²²⁰
- 3.26** In addition, Mr Matt Gould of Wollondilly Shire Council identified the metro link between the Aerotropolis and Campbelltown-Macarthur as an absolute priority if the economic investment opportunities arising from the new airport are to be realised in the Wollondilly Shire.²²¹ Similarly, Ms Kate Stares, Strategic Partnership Manager, Campbelltown City Council identified the Glenfield-Leppington extensions and the Campbelltown-Macarthur extensions as priorities.²²²
- 3.27** Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue also agreed that the three possible extensions to the metro were priorities stating that 'this is Western Sydney's airport and we want to make sure that Western Sydney is connected to it'. He emphasised that there is a need for planning, corridor preservation and clarity about when the extensions would be delivered.²²³ This accorded with the evidence of Mr Ben Taylor, this time appearing in his capacity as Chief Executive Officer, Wollondilly Shire Council. Advocating for the north-south rail connection from Tallawong through to Macarthur he said it appeared that commitments under the Western Sydney City Deal would be honoured but he stressed 'What is actually needed is a firm delivery timetable'.²²⁴
- 3.28** It was also argued that extensions to the current Metro Western Sydney Airport line should be prioritised above other projects, specifically, Metro West.²²⁵ Mr Ben Taylor, in his capacity as

²¹⁹ Evidence, Mr Kerry Robinson OAM, Chief Executive Officer, Blacktown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 38.

²²⁰ Evidence, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council, 9 February 2024, p 24.

²²¹ Evidence, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 24.

²²² Evidence, Ms Kate Stares, Strategic Partnership Manager, Campbelltown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 40.

²²³ Evidence, Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, 4 December 2023, p 48.

²²⁴ See Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, pp 32 and 34.

²²⁵ Evidence, Dr George Greiss, Chair, Mayoral Forum, The Parks, Sydney Parklands Councils, 4 December 2023, p 14; Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney Parklands Councils, 4 December 2023, pp 14-15; Evidence, Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD,

Chair of the General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney Parkland Councils, asserted this line is crucially important for many, particular those in the southwest region, where some areas 'do not have a public transport network at this stage, so they're going from a zero base. It's not about enhancing and providing a better service. It's going from a zero base, car only'.²²⁶

- 3.29** Of a similar view, Mr Charles Casuscelli, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils argued residents that live further west of Parramatta would not benefit from the increased capacity between Parramatta and the CBD that Metro West creates:

...[T]he Metro West, increases capacity between the CBD and Parramatta, but what does that do for people of Western Sydney that live at Blacktown and Glenmore Park and St Marys? It does nothing. You just can't get to the added capacity at Parramatta.²²⁷

Extending the heavy rail line from Leppington

- 3.30** Despite the considerable support for the extensions to the Metro Western Sydney Airport, including the link from Leppington to the Aerotropolis, EcoTransit Sydney instead argued that the T2 heavy rail line from Leppington should be extended to the airport. EcoTransit contended that this would be a simple, cheap way of connecting the new airport to the city and stated that it would make travel between Sydney Airport and the new airport much faster than the metro currently under construction to St Marys.²²⁸ EcoTransit Committee Member Mr Colin Schroeder explained:

...if the line was extended from Leppington to the airport, the transit time between the airports would be something like 47 minutes but with the metro being built and having to change at St Marys and then change at Central to get to Kingsford Smith, you're looking at about 87 minutes. It's a no-brainer to extend the line from Leppington instead of building a metro and then converting the Leppington line to metro and having people change trains again to get from airport to airport.²²⁹

- 3.31** In addition, EcoTransit Sydney argued that there are environmental benefits to heavy rail links as they reduce the need for major tunnelling and the substantial contributions to carbon emissions born by concreting these tunnels. EcoTransit stated that no major tunnelling would be needed to extend the heavy rail line from Leppington to the new airport and noted that land resumptions would not be as extensive as those required to build the metro to St Marys in the north.²³⁰

Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 15.

²²⁶ Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, pp 14-15.

²²⁷ Evidence, Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 15.

²²⁸ Evidence, Mr Colin Schroeder, Committee Member, EcoTransit 4 December 2023, p 60. See also: Submission 48, EcoTransit Sydney, p 2.

²²⁹ Evidence, Mr Colin Schroeder, Committee Member, EcoTransit, 4 December 2023, p 60.

²³⁰ Submission 48, EcoTransit Sydney, p 2.

3.32 Mr Matt Doherty of EcoTransit also noted the southwest growth centre in Western Sydney and given this he argued that the Leppington heavy rail line should also be extended to Narellan via Oran Park. Mr Doherty said:

...housing estates are sprouting up either side of the Camden Valley Way. As a child I saw housing estates sprout up either side of the Campbelltown Road as well and there was never any public transport links for those. There was however the south-west rail link, an identified corridor...going towards Narellan via Oran Park, so my strong recommendation is that that be revisited and that the South West Rail Link be extended as heavy rail in a cost-effective way down towards Narellan at least.²³¹

3.33 This accords with Mr Andrew Carfield, Camden Council evidence above about considerable population growth in the Camden area and the need for a train including in the new development area of Oran Park (although, as noted, Mr Carfield advocated the metro for this purpose, not heavy rail). He identified that Oran Park was a master planned community which is nearing completion and that residents who have moved there had been presented with a model showing where the future rail corridor would run (from the Aerotropolis to Macarthur), with a future railway station at Oran Park.²³² He noted that it is unclear when Oran Park will have train access, that such rail connections are essential to link residents to jobs and that with the community growing so quickly roadways are 'congested and breaking'.²³³

3.34 Ms Julianna Walton, Convenor, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc. also stressed the need for a train in Oran Park and stated '...there is no good reason Oran Park has been allowed to develop without the railway station shown on the map physically being there now while the people are moving in'.²³⁴

3.35 While it is understood that there are bus services linking Oran Park to the railway stations of Leppington, Minto and Campbelltown, and to Narellan, Mr Mick Owens, General Manager and Mr Mark Perich, Director of Greenfields Development Company No. 2 indicated that these services are quite indirect.²³⁵ Mr Perich further indicated this may encourage people to drive their cars to nearby railway stations for onward journeys instead of using public transport. He stated: 'I'd rather get in the car and drive to Leppington. I did that today to come here on the train from Leppington. If there was a metro at Oran Park, I would have jumped straight on the metro'.²³⁶

²³¹ Evidence, Mr Matt Doherty, Committee Member, EcoTransit Sydney, 4 December 2023, p 60.

²³² Evidence, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council, 9 February 2024, p 26.

²³³ Evidence, Mr Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council, 9 February 2024, pp 26 and 27.

²³⁴ Ms Julianna Walton, Convenor, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc., 9 February 2024, pp 17 and 18.

²³⁵ Evidence, Mr Mick Owens, General Manager and Mr Mark Perich, Director, Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 34.

²³⁶ Evidence, Mr Mark Perich, Director, Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 34.

Other potential metro or heavy rail extensions

3.36 Inquiry participants also emphasised the need for other north and south metro or heavy rail links. Ms Gail Connelly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta highlighted the importance of establishing rail links connecting Parramatta northward to Epping and southward to Kogarah. Ms Connelly stated the link from Parramatta to Kogarah 'has the opportunity to connect one economic powerhouse, being the airport at Botany—the Sydney airport—with the west'. Ms Connelly also noted that work has been done with other councils to design and plan a corridor for the link:

There is an entire document called the River Rail which shows the potential corridor and how it could perform and what sort of service it should be...That document has been with Transport for NSW for some time. It is recognised as a critical corridor and one of the highly travelled corridors, but I don't think it's emerged yet as something, in terms of funding, for further alignment investigations.²³⁷

3.37 A link from Norwest to Parramatta was also supported.²³⁸ Mr Sharath Mahendran, creator of YouTube channel Building Beautifully, advocated for this link to connect all the way to Kogarah, passing 'through Parramatta, ideally from Norwest to Kogarah, linking most train lines, to improve Sydney's inter-suburban and inter-regional travel and help improve access to Parramatta, which is meant to be Sydney's second CBD'.²³⁹

3.38 Participants in the inquiry also raised other potential connections, espousing the positive impact they would have on the region. For example, Mr Sharath Mahendran, creator of Youtube channel Building Beautifully detailed the benefits of connecting Bankstown to the Western Sydney Airport and Westmead to the Aerotropolis.²⁴⁰

3.39 Mr Mahendran asserted that these connections will 'allow some of the poorly serviced regions of the Liverpool local government area to benefit from public transport access' and for commuters to easily travel between the Western Parkland, Central River and Eastern Harbour cities via one railway.²⁴¹

3.40 The connection from Westmead to the Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis was supported by others.²⁴² In particular, Western Sydney Airport Corporation Ltd argued that 'this service will be necessary within twenty years to provide the increased connectivity required as [Western Sydney Airport] becomes Sydney's largest airport and primary gateway to Australia's global city'.²⁴³

²³⁷ Evidence, Ms Gail Connelly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta, 5 February 2024, p 23.

²³⁸ See: Submission 47, City of Parramatta, pp 2-3; Submission 45, The Hills Shire Council, p 2.

²³⁹ Submission 27, Building Beautifully, pp 3-4.

²⁴⁰ Submission 27, Building Beautifully, pp 3-4.

²⁴¹ Submission 27, Building Beautifully, pp 2-4. See also: Evidence, Mr Sharath Mahendran, Creator, Building Beautifully, 5 February 2024, p 9.

²⁴² See for example: Submission 52, Centre for Western Sydney, p 7; Submission 41, Planning Institute of Australia, p 1 and Submission 47, City of Parramatta, pp 2-3.

²⁴³ Submission 62, Western Sydney Airport, p 13.

Extending stage 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail

- 3.41** As mentioned in chapter 1, stage 1 of the Parramatta Light Rail will connect Westmead to Carlingford via the Parramatta Central Business District (CBD) and Camellia. It is expected to open in mid-2024.²⁴⁴ NSW Planning approval has also been granted for stage 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail project which is to connect stage 1 and the Parramatta CBD to Sydney Olympic Park via Camellia, Ermington, Melrose Park and Wentworth Point, ending at the Carter Street Precinct.²⁴⁵
- 3.42** However, Cumberland City Council argued that the Government should better align public transport services with planned growth with the Cumberland local government area.²⁴⁶ The current population is over 236,000 people and this is expected to increase to 300,000 by 2036.²⁴⁷ Against this backdrop, the Council contended that stage 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail should terminate at Lidcombe, not the Carter Street precinct.²⁴⁸
- 3.43** Mr Daniel Cavallo, Acting General Manager, Cumberland City Council explained that the Carter Street precinct is not closely linked to any kind of interchange or junction. However, if the Government extended the light rail approximately three kilometres from Carter Street to Lidcombe connection with such an interchange would be achieved. This in turn would facilitate local movements, linking employment and retail areas, and improve the connectivity of the light rail more broadly. Mr Cavallo also explained that the extension would help to alleviate road congestion at the Lidcombe interchange which will only rise as the population grows. He stated:

[E]veryone is coming to Lidcombe by car or being dropped off because those strong transport links aren't in place. There's a lot of benefit with a short link that [will]...take some of the pressure off places like Lidcombe, which is a large interchange but also an area that has got density growing as we speak.²⁴⁹

Conversion of the T3 Bankstown heavy rail line

- 3.44** In contrast to calls for the prompt delivery of metro rail in Western Sydney, including possible extensions, there was opposition to metro rail (additional to the calls for a greater focus on heavy rail discussed above).
- 3.45** In particular, some inquiry participants expressed opposition to the conversion of the T3 Bankstown heavy rail line, between Sydenham to Bankstown, as part of the Metro City and

²⁴⁴ Transport for NSW, *Parramatta Light Rail*, <https://www.nsw.gov.au/driving-boating-and-transport/projects/parramatta-light-rail>.

²⁴⁵ Transport for NSW, *Parramatta Light Rail*, <https://www.nsw.gov.au/driving-boating-and-transport/projects/parramatta-light-rail>.

²⁴⁶ Submission 14, Cumberland City Council, p 14.

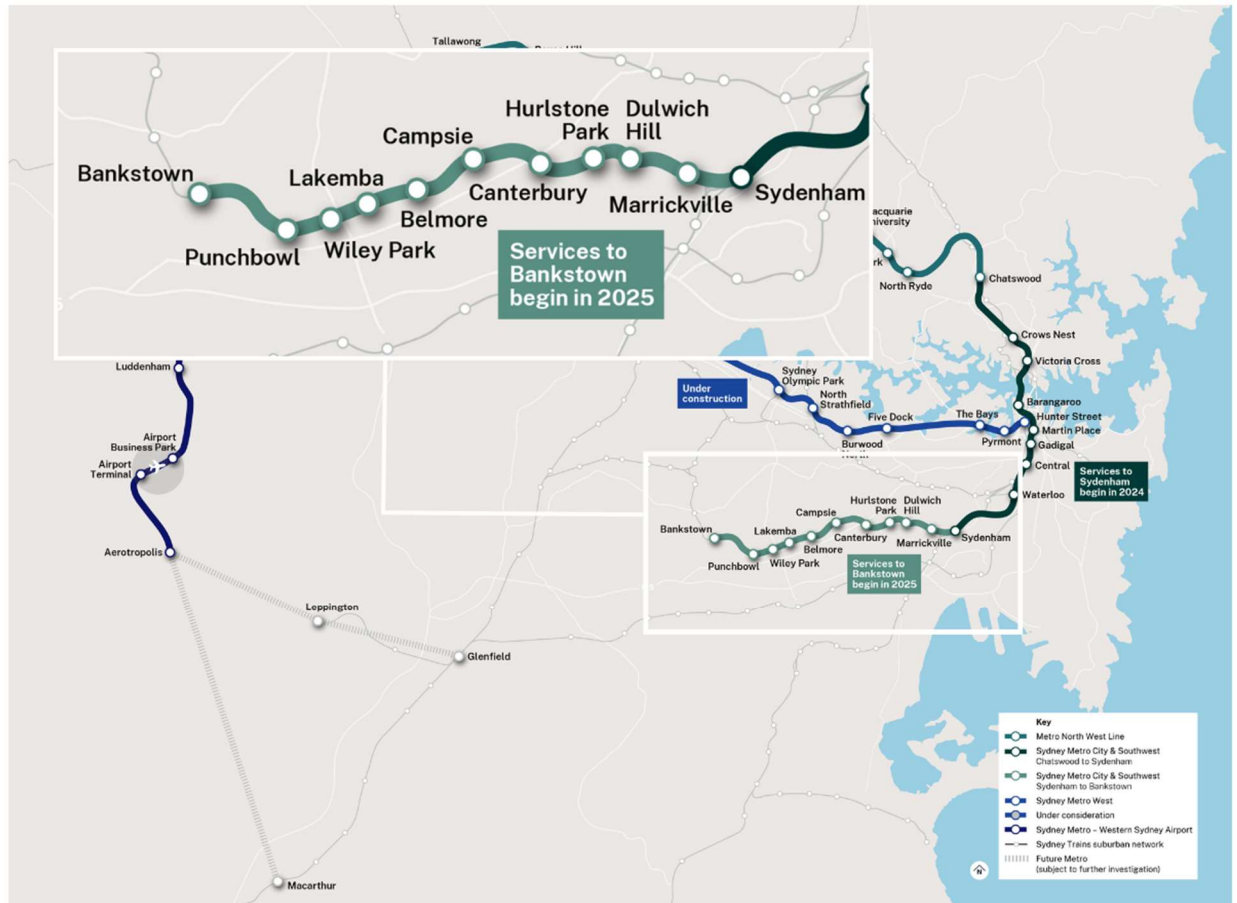
²⁴⁷ Evidence, Ms Lisa Lake, Mayor, Cumberland City Council, 5 February 2024, p 15.

²⁴⁸ Submission 14, Cumberland City Council, p 14.

²⁴⁹ Evidence, Mr Daniel Cavallo, Acting General Manager, Cumberland City Council, 5 February 2024, p 25.

Southwest project. Maps of the metro line, between Sydenham to Bankstown, and the T3 Bankstown heavy rail line follows.

Figure 9 Sydenham to Bankstown on the Metro City and Southwest line (as of April 2024)



Source: Sydney Metro, Planning for future extensions, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/planning-future-extensions>

Figure 10 T3 Bankstown line (since 2013)



Source: Submission 35, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA), p 2

3.46 Mr David Reynolds, Member, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance noted that the business case for the conversion had never been publicly released. He argued that the justification for the conversion does not exist.²⁵⁰

3.47 The Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) stated that the current Bankstown line is one of the best functioning in NSW²⁵¹ and that Governments should focus on improving services. Branch Secretary, Mr Alex Claassens stated:

[A]ll the arguments they've used to build metros and convert our existing railway lines are all really about giving developers a leg up...It's not about providing a commuter service...You can actually run metro trains where we don't currently run anything...Sydney, if it's going to be a world-class city, needs to have multiple modes of transport but don't go out there and wreck a perfectly good railway system just for the sake of it.²⁵²

3.48 Mr Reynolds also questioned one of the main justifications put forward for the conversion – increasing City Circle line capacity. He stated that the T3 line only uses 10 per cent of City Circle capacity and that removing it would only result in small improvements to the T2 and T8 services.²⁵³ Similarly, Ms Barbara Coorey, Councillor, Canterbury Bankstown Council

²⁵⁰ Evidence, Mr David Reynolds, Member, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, 4 December 2023, p 53.

²⁵¹ Submission 66, Rail, Tram and Bus Union, p 2.

²⁵² Evidence, Mr Alex Claassens, Branch Secretary, Rail, Tram and Bus Union (NSW), 4 December 2023, p 64.

²⁵³ Evidence, Mr David Reynolds, Member, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, 4 December 2023, p 53.

questioned claims the T3 Bankstown line had been causing bottlenecks within the City Circle.²⁵⁴

- 3.49** In addition, Mr Reynolds, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance raised doubts that the conversion would decrease car congestion in Western Sydney by encouraging people to use rail services as the metro would merely replicate what is already there with the T3 line. Even if there were to be increased frequency there would be no corresponding increase in connectivity to new locations.²⁵⁵
- 3.50** Ms Barbara Coorey also indicated that if it is necessary to increase services along the T3 line to support increased demand this could be done through improved signalling, conversion to a metro is not necessary.²⁵⁶ This accorded with evidence of the RTBU²⁵⁷ and Mr Steve Longhurst, Member, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance who stated 'Train services can be increased in frequency with a much cheaper signalling option'.²⁵⁸
- 3.51** Another objection raised concerning the metro conversion was the major disruption it would cause to communities and businesses along the T3 line from Sydenham to Bankstown and beyond. Mr Roydon Ng, Convenor, Restore T2 Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line, stated that the alternative transport plan needed over the 12 month period during which the line would be closed would cause congestion with a near doubling of buses in Lidcombe everyday.²⁵⁹
- 3.52** Mr Reynolds agreed, stating the shutdown 'and replacement by a shuttle service will cause great inconvenience for passengers' noting that it was unclear where replacement buses will come from given there is currently a shortage of buses and bus drivers in Sydney.²⁶⁰
- 3.53** In this context, Mr Claassens stated 1,200 buses per day would be needed and he exclaimed 'Where the hell do they think they're going to find those?'²⁶¹ The RTBU further stated commuters would be forced onto a bus network that is already crippled with flow on effects across the city.²⁶²
- 3.54** Ms Coorey raised particular concerns that there will not be enough buses for people to get to work, putting their jobs at risk and causing 'economic and traffic havoc' not just for the

²⁵⁴ Evidence, Ms Barbara Coorey, Councillor, Canterbury Bankstown Council, 9 February 2024, p 9.

²⁵⁵ Evidence, Mr David Reynolds, Evidence, Mr David Reynolds, Member, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, 4 December 2023, p 55.

²⁵⁶ Evidence, Ms Barbara Coorey, Councillor, Canterbury-Bankstown Council, 9 February 2024, p 9.

²⁵⁷ Submission 66, Rail, Tram and Bus Union, pp 4 and 5.

²⁵⁸ Evidence, Mr Steve Longhurst, Member, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, 4 December 2023, p 54.

²⁵⁹ Evidence, Mr Roydon Ng, Convenor, Restore T2 Inner West Line and save T3 Bankstown Line, 4 December 2023, p 52.

²⁶⁰ Evidence, Mr David Reynolds, Member, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, 4 December 2023, p 53.

²⁶¹ Evidence, Mr Alex Claassens, Branch Secretary, RTBU, 4 December 2023, p 65; see also Submission 66, Rail, Tram and Bus Union, p 3.

²⁶² Submission 66, Rail, Tram and Bus Union, p 3.

immediate area but also for other parts of Sydney. She stated '[W]e are not living with a fence around us. It is for the rest of Sydney. It is for the rest of the train lines that surround us and that has not been taken into account'.²⁶³ She also said that a lot of businesses along the T3 line depend on it for their livelihood and there appeared to be no small business package to assist these people during the shutdown.²⁶⁴

- 3.55** Ms Rebecca McPhee, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Customer Operations and Outcomes, Sydney Metro stated at the committee's 9 February 2024 hearing that procurement of bus services to account for the T3 line closure was ongoing.²⁶⁵
- 3.56** Ms McPhee further stated that there will be traditional rail replacement services that serve each station and express buses, as well as a rail shuttle between Bankstown and Lidcombe so that passengers have a rail route from Bankstown to the Sydney CBD.²⁶⁶
- 3.57** Government witnesses also indicated that account would be taken of 'lessons learned' through previous closures of the line both in relation to bus procurement and provision, and around managing traffic conditions.²⁶⁷ However, Ms McPhee conceded that previous T3 line closures had been for much shorter periods than 12 months.²⁶⁸
- 3.58** As noted in chapter 1, the Government has committed to the conversion of the Sydenham to Bankstown section of the current T3 Bankstown heavy rail line to metro as part of the Metro City and Southwest project, following findings of an independent review to the effect that converting the heavy rail line to metro would benefit the transport network.²⁶⁹
- 3.59** The T3 Bankstown line is expected to close sometime between July and October 2024 to allow a conversion process of approximately 12 months to take place. It is understood that metro services between Sydenham and Bankstown will begin in 2025.²⁷⁰
- 3.60** According to the Government, by 2036 passenger demand for many heavy rail lines across the network may exceed available capacity.²⁷¹ Metro investment is designed to address this, and the Government stated the Metro City and Southwest would greatly increase capacity through the Sydney CBD and link to Bankstown, increasing total rail network capacity by 60 per cent.

²⁶³ Evidence, Ms Barbara Coorey, Councillor, Canterbury-Bankstown Council, 9 February 2024, p 9.

²⁶⁴ Evidence, Ms Barbara Coorey, Councillor, Canterbury-Bankstown Council, 9 February 2024, p 12.

²⁶⁵ Evidence, Ms Rebecca McPhee, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Customer Operations and Outcomes, Sydney Metro 9 February 2024, pp 39 and 40.

²⁶⁶ Evidence, Ms Rebecca McPhee, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Customer Operations and Outcomes, Sydney Metro, 9 February 2024, p 39.

²⁶⁷ See Evidence, Ms Rebecca McPhee, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Customer Operations and Outcomes, Sydney Metro, 9 February 2024, p 39; and Evidence, Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director, Public Transport, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 39.

²⁶⁸ Evidence, Ms McPhee, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Customer Operations and Outcomes, Sydney Metro, 9 February 2024, p 39.

²⁶⁹ Sydney Metro, *Sydenham to Bankstown*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/citysouthwest/sydenham-bankstown>; see also Transport for NSW, *Sydney Metro Review*, <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/industry/independent-reviews/sydney-metro-review>.

²⁷¹ Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 12.

During the one-hour morning peak period the Government expects the metro to support a 71 per cent growth in rail patronage and to attract 16,300 more rail passengers thereby reducing road congestion.²⁷²

Committee comment

Potential additional metro stations

- 3.61** Regarding Metro West, the committee welcomes the recent decision to investigate two further potential stations west of Sydney Olympic Park. The committee also accepts evidence that it should not be the sole aim of the Metro West to move passengers between Parramatta and the Sydney CBD – intra-regional connectivity is important too.
- 3.62** A gap between the Parramatta and Sydney Olympic Park stations of 6-7 kilometres would be too large and extra stations west of Olympic Park would encourage local development and employment thereby benefiting the Western Sydney community and economy. The committee notes that an investigation into the addition of two further stations on the Metro West line is underway. However, regardless of the outcome additional stations are crucial to the success of this service and decisions on the location of these stations need to be made promptly before it is too late or expensive retrofitting is needed. The committee recommends that the Government commit to and deliver two further stations west of Sydney Olympic Park on the Metro West line in locations that present further housing and economic revitalisation opportunities.

Recommendation 3

That the Government commit to and deliver two further stations west of Sydney Olympic Park on the Metro West line in locations that present further housing and economic revitalisation opportunities.

- 3.63** Regarding Metro Western Sydney Airport, the committee argues that the confirmed section of this link also includes too few stations limiting its usefulness for local residents and businesses and opportunities for development. Additional stations on the confirmed section are absolutely essential and must be operational by the time of the Airport's opening in 2026. It is recommended that the Government:
- immediately assess the feasibility of additional stations on the confirmed section of the Metro Western Sydney Airport line so that any planning and development commence by the time of the Airport's opening in 2026
 - ensure planning and development of future extensions to the line include adequate number of, and distance between, stations.

²⁷² Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 5 and 12; and Evidence, Ms Rebecca McPhee, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Customer Operations and Outcomes, Sydney Metro, 9 February 2024, p 43.

Recommendation 4

That the Government:

- immediately assess the feasibility of additional stations on the confirmed section of the Metro Western Sydney Airport line so that any planning and development commence by the time of the Airport's opening in 2026
 - ensure planning and development of future extensions to the line include adequate number of, and distance between, stations.
-

Improving interconnectivity – north-south links and Airport access

- 3.64** The committee notes the importance of interconnectivity across Western Sydney to encourage investment, support local jobs, reduce car dependency and promote access to services. Western Sydney is experiencing considerable population and economic growth, particularly with the new Western Sydney Airport opening in 2026. It is therefore concerning that there are insufficient public transport connections across the region. This needs to be addressed promptly if Western Sydney is to fully realise its considerable potential. Continuing to connect up the region with wider Sydney is also important especially if the full benefits of the new airport are to be felt.
- 3.65** In short, prompt delivery of a complete north-south rail link stretching from Tallawong to Campbelltown-Macarthur is crucial as is a rail link from the Western Sydney Airport precinct to Leppington.
- 3.66** The committee is also of the view that in considering metro extensions in Western Sydney there has been too little focus on extending heavy rail. The committee acknowledges calls for an extension of the Leppington heavy rail line to Western Sydney Airport. This may be a potentially cheaper option, providing more direct routes with the added benefit of no major tunneling being required.
- 3.67** The committee notes the 2023-24 Budget funding commitment to develop business cases to consider extensions to the Metro Western Sydney Airport (St Marys to Tallawong via Schofields and Marsden Park, Bradfield to Macarthur via Oran Park and Narellan and Bradfield to Glenfield via Leppington). Given that there are various benefits of a heavy rail link from Leppington to the new airport, the business cases for metro extensions should also include the potential alternate extension of the T2 heavy rail line from Leppington to Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport.
- 3.68** Notwithstanding the Government's allocation of funding to the preparation of business cases for extensions of the Metro Western Sydney Airport line, there needs to be prompt commitment and delivery of the crucial north-south rail and airport connection, regardless of whether it is delivered as metro or heavy rail. This is to ensure the benefits of the new airport are realised by or around the time of opening and residents of Western Sydney are better able to access local jobs and services.
- 3.69** The committee also notes concerns that the newly settled Oran Park should not have been allowed to develop without the provision of a rail link. In particular, the committee is concerned at evidence that access to jobs and road congestion are serious problems in this locality, concerns that are increased by the fact that it is unclear how long any Metro Western

Sydney Airport connection from the Aerotropolis to Macarthur passing through Oran Park will take to be delivered.

- 3.70** To that end, it is recommended that the Government complete, as a matter of urgency, business cases for the extensions of the Metro Western Sydney Airport line, include investigation of the possible alternate extension of the T2 heavy rail line from Leppington to Western Sydney Airport via Oran Park with a commitment to completing the north-south rail link and connection to Leppington by 2032.

Recommendation 5

That the Government complete, as a matter of urgency, business cases for the extensions of the Metro Western Sydney Airport line, including investigation of the possible alternate extension of the T2 heavy rail line from Leppington to Western Sydney Airport via Oran Park with a commitment to completing the north-south rail link and connection to Leppington by 2032.

Extending stage 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail

- 3.71** The committee supports extending stage 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail a modest 3 kilometres to Lidcombe railway station instead of it ending at the Carter Street precinct which, unlike Lidcombe railway station is not an interchange. Such an extension would assist to alleviate increasing road congestion at Lidcombe railway station against a backdrop of considerable population growth.
- 3.72** It is recommended that the Government urgently investigate extending stage 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail Project so that the line no longer terminates at the Carter Street precinct but continues from there terminating instead at Lidcombe railway station.

Recommendation 6

That the Government urgently investigate extending stage 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail Project so that the line no longer terminates at the Carter Street precinct but continues from there to terminate at Lidcombe railway station.

Conversion of the T3 Bankstown heavy rail line

- 3.73** The committee acknowledges there is opposition to the conversion of the T3 Bankstown heavy rail line to a metro system as part of the Metro City and Southwest project. While the Government has justified this conversion with an independent review highlighting potential benefits to the transport network, including a substantial increase in capacity and efficiency, the committee recognises the strong sentiments against this conversion.
- 3.74** The opposition stems from concerns over a perceived lack of public justification and transparency, with some arguing that the current T3 Bankstown line is among the best functioning in the State and should be improved rather than altered. The committee notes that

concerns have also been raised about the potential major disruptions to communities and businesses during the conversion period.

- 3.75** The extensive shutdown period (12 months) for the T3 Bankstown line is rapidly approaching. Given the significant implications for the communities and stakeholders involved, the committee urges the Government, as a matter of priority, to announce the temporary transport measures it will be taking. These measures should be detailed, transparent, and considerate of the potential disruptions to the daily lives of affected residents and businesses.

Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis

- 3.76** The Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis are key projects of relevance to the current and future transport needs of Western Sydney. Rail extensions to enable Western Sydney and Greater Sydney to reap the full benefits of this key project have been discussed earlier in this chapter. This section concentrates on other transport-related matters important to the airport and Aerotropolis.

Staged delivery of public transport services

- 3.77** With the Western Sydney Airport expected to open in 2026, it is understood that there will be staged delivery of public transport services to support the airport and Aerotropolis. Mr Simon Hickey of Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport explained that optimal ground transport is essential to maximise the airport's economic benefits to Western Sydney and beyond. He stated that there is a need to plan and fund the growth of the transport network over the next 40 years to keep pace with the growth of the airport and the Aerotropolis:

...we need to plan for and fund the growth in [the transport] network now so that the inevitable growth of the airport over the next 40 years is met by a public transport system that will provide great connectivity for local passengers and visiting tourist and, of course, for the tens of thousands of people from Western Sydney and beyond who will enjoy high-quality employment both at the airport and in the developing area around it.²⁷³

- 3.78** As already noted, only stage 1 of the Metro Western Sydney Airport from the Aerotropolis to St Marys is expected to be open when airline passenger services start at the airport²⁷⁴ although funds have been committed to facilitate business cases regarding extensions to that metro.²⁷⁵ Given this initial absence of rail services linking many centres of Western Sydney and beyond to the airport and Aerotropolis, bus services will be very important. In this vein, the Western Sydney City Deal committed the Government to establish rapid bus services from the

²⁷³ Evidence, Mr Simon Hickey, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport, 9 February 2024, 9 February 2024, p 2.

²⁷⁴ Submission 62, Western Sydney Airport, p 4; and Sydney Metro, *About Sydney Metro*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/about>.

²⁷⁵ Sydney Metro, *Planning for future extensions*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/planning-future-extensions>.

metropolitan centres of Penrith, Liverpool and Campbelltown to Western Sydney Airport before it opens in 2026, and to the Aerotropolis.²⁷⁶

- 3.79** In outlining Western Sydney Airport's early priorities for transport Mr Hickey, Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport noted that optimising journey times for the bus network and for rail journeys to the Sydney CBD via the St Marys metro would be important. He stated:

Our submission calls for planning and funding for growth in the Sydney Metro Western Sydney airport rail line; further development of the road network around [the airport]...optimisation of journey times for the [airport] bus network...and a modification to the Blue Mountains Line train timetable to include St Marys in the stopping pattern to optimise connectivity to the Sydney CBD for passengers transferring from the first stage of the [airport] metro.²⁷⁷

- 3.80** In identifying the Glenfield/Leppington and Campbelltown/Macarthur metro extensions as priorities for Campbelltown City Council, Ms Kate Stares, Strategic Partnerships Manager, Campbelltown City Council also acknowledged the need for staged delivery of transport services for the airport, noting that metro extensions would be expensive and that in the interim rapid bus services would be very important.²⁷⁸

Rapid bus connections for Western Sydney Airport and the Aerotropolis

- 3.81** Despite the Government commitment for a rapid bus service that would connect metropolitan centres and the airport before the airport opens, some inquiry participants raised concerns that these buses would not be rapid initially because of a lack of supporting infrastructure. Mr Ben Taylor, appearing in his capacity as Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney Parkland Councils explained the difference between a basic bus service and a rapid bus service noting that a highly rapid bus service incorporates a level of infrastructure that makes it similar to a train line:

You go from the basic bus service through to the highly rapid bus service, but the far continuum effectively is almost like a train line, where you have the stations that exist in the middle of the road, you have wholly dedicated lanes and you have priority through intersections or you have overpasses and underpasses. Because of that, it effectively operates like a train line, and so you can cover the distance really quickly. You can move through a lot of the buses at the same time, which means you get a huge volume as well. You can almost get the volume of a train line with a bus service.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁶ Sydney Metro, *Planning for future extensions*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/planning-future-extensions>.

²⁷⁷ Evidence, Mr Simon Hickey, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport, 9 February 2024, 9 February 2024, p 2.

²⁷⁸ Evidence, Ms Kate Stares, Campbelltown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 40.

²⁷⁹ Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, p 17.

3.82 Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, further stated that the bus service that will greet commuters around the time of the opening of the airport will be a standard bus service, not a rapid one:

...the original commitment in the city deal between the councils and the State and Federal Governments was for a rapid bus network connecting Liverpool, Penrith, Campbelltown and Bradfield, or the new airport. Our understanding now is that that service will not be rapid in its first instance when it first opens...[I]t will simply be a normal bus service because of the lack of infrastructure and foresight...in what's needed to provide a rapid transport service. I understand it will, over time, evolve into a rapid network...²⁸⁰

3.83 Dr George Greiss, Chair, Mayoral Forum, The Parks, Sydney Parkland Councils said that without the rapid bus network it could take longer to travel between Campbelltown and the new airport than between the new airport and the Sydney CBD. He noted that this was a disappointing outcome, blocking residents of Western Sydney from valuable employment opportunities and he stated: 'We are talking about what people are claiming to be a game changer in Western Sydney and over 200,000 jobs being created, but the majority of Western Sydney cannot get access to it by public transport'.²⁸¹

3.84 In addition, Mr Charles Casuscelli from WSROC questioned why a commitment had been made to connect the airport and Aerotropolis by rapid bus with Liverpool, Penrith and Campbelltown while the metropolitan centre of Blacktown had been left out.²⁸²

3.85 Ms Harri Bancroft, Policy Manager – Mobility, Committee for Sydney also noted that the airport bus services would need to be tailored. They would need space for people's luggage, need to be easy to embark and disembark from and need to involve adequate bus shelters as 'You don't want to be rained on your way to the airport with all your bags etc'.²⁸³

The need for 24-hour connecting services

3.86 As the Western Sydney Airport will be a 24-hour airport, there is a need for 24-hour public transport connections to and from the airport. Western Sydney Airport Corporation Ltd (WSA Co Ltd) noted that while the Metro Western Sydney Airport (Aerotropolis to St Marys) will provide a high frequency service, if there are limited connections to the broader public transport network this will hinder competition and growth at the airport and across the Aerotropolis.²⁸⁴ WSA Co Ltd also noted that as a 24/7 operation, regular, reliable and safe local bus services would be necessary to support jobs at the airport.²⁸⁵

²⁸⁰ Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, pp 16 and 17.

²⁸¹ Evidence, Dr George Greiss, Chair, Mayoral Forum, The Parks, Sydney Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, p 16.

²⁸² Evidence, Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, WSROC, 4 December 2023, p 15.

²⁸³ Evidence, Ms Harri Bancroft, Policy Manager – Mobility, Committee for Sydney, 9 February 2024, p 21.

²⁸⁴ Submission 62, Western Sydney Airport, p 7.

²⁸⁵ Submission 62, Western Sydney Airport, p 10.

- 3.87** Ms Peta Gamon, Executive Director, Western Sydney Aerotropolis, Transport for NSW confirmed Transport for NSW is in the early planning stages to develop appropriate timetables for the bus network and metro to serve the airport which will be informed by how the airport will be used. She stated: '[A] lot of that is reliant on understanding how the airport [is going to be used] ...what we're going to see with passenger movements...and also worker movements...'.²⁸⁶ Ms Gamon also noted that developing and delivering safe transport services is the number one priority.²⁸⁷
- 3.88** Government witnesses also acknowledged that an important factor is people's ability to connect with onward journey services in the middle of the night once they are dropped at a centre by bus or metro services (e.g. Liverpool, St Marys or Campbelltown) from the airport. In this regard Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director Public Transport, Transport for NSW noted that there are NightRide bus services completing 24-hour availability of transport along key rail corridors in Sydney. He also noted that as the city grows Transport for NSW wants to continue to expand 24-hour services in more locations.²⁸⁸
- 3.89** In conducting the planning work Ms Gamon also indicated that Transport for NSW is consulting with the airport, Sydney Metro and bus services and examining what is done in overseas jurisdictions that have 24-hour centres to determine best practice.²⁸⁹ Ms Rebecca McPhee of Sydney Metro confirmed that the hours of operation for the Metro Western Sydney Airport were not finalised but stated 'Because of the metro product, there is very little shutdown overnight, so we will adapt that'.²⁹⁰
- 3.90** Noting the 24-hour operations of the airport, the Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, more broadly highlighted the commitment of several Parkland Councils to deliver vibrant night-time economies driven by businesses that offer dining and entertainment. The Parks argued that public transport options are critical to this task. However, with public transport services difficult or non-existent outside of peak periods, the Parks contended that more consideration needs to be made for the 'safe and reliable provision of public transport services outside peak periods'.²⁹¹
- 3.91** Others echoed this sentiment, with the Planning Institute of Australia calling for train services to be extended beyond midnight and night bus services to all stations from the city to ensure accessibility public transport at night and alignment with night time economy goals.²⁹²

²⁸⁶ Evidence, Ms Peta Gamon, Executive Director, Western Sydney Aerotropolis, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 45.

²⁸⁷ Evidence, Ms Peta Gamon, Executive Director, Western Sydney Aerotropolis, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 45.

²⁸⁸ Evidence, Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director Public Transport, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 45; see also Evidence, Ms Peta Gamon, Executive Director, Western Sydney Aerotropolis, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 45.

²⁸⁹ Evidence, Ms Peta Gamon, Executive Director, Western Sydney Aerotropolis, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 45.

²⁹⁰ Evidence, Ms Rebecca McPhee, Sydney Metro, 9 February 2024, p 45.

²⁹¹ Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, pp 6-7.

²⁹² Submission 41, Planning Institute of Australia, p 2.

Committee comment

- 3.92** It is disappointing that the Western Sydney City Deal commitment for rapid buses between the Western Sydney Airport and the metropolitan centres of Liverpool, Penrith and Campbelltown – prior to the airport opening – may not be honoured. Rather on the opening of the airport in 2026 it may be the case that only standard bus services will be available to link these centres owing to a lack of preparatory investment in infrastructure.
- 3.93** As rail links between the airport and Aerotropolis and these major centres are far from fully developed, rapid bus services will be crucial. Rapid buses will help to integrate the transport network, link the residents of Western Sydney with the valuable job opportunities offered by the new airport and Aerotropolis, and fully realise the benefits of these projects. Rapid bus infrastructure must be progressed as an absolute priority and, in addition to Liverpool, Campbelltown and Penrith, it should link the metropolitan centre of Blacktown with the airport and Aerotropolis.
- 3.94** The committee also acknowledges that buses linking the airport should be fit for purpose with room for luggage, easy access on and off the bus, and adequate bus shelters to protect passengers from the weather.
- 3.95** It is noted that as the Western Sydney Airport will operate for 24 hours, safe 24-hour ground transport will be essential. There will also need to be 24-hour provision of local services for those working at the airport, bus and metro services from the airport to metropolitan centres, and onward journey services for those dropped from the airport via bus or metro to metropolitan centres.
- 3.96** The committee is pleased to hear that in conducting planning, government agencies are giving close consideration to how the airport is likely to be used by looking at best practice from other jurisdictions that have more experience in operating 24-hour transport networks. Careful planning and execution are essential. It is noted that sub-optimal overnight transport would likely hinder economic growth and productivity.
- 3.97** However, noting the calls for 24-hour services to be expanded across Western Sydney, it is argued that such planning must be expedited and broadened to encompass the broader Sydney region. The goal should be to establish a public transport network that is not only robust during the day but also equally dependable and accessible throughout the night. It is recommended that the Government expedite and broaden the scope of the planning and delivery of 24-hour public transport services to encompass the Sydney region (Western Parkland City, Central River City and Eastern Parkland City).

Recommendation 7

That the Government expedite and broaden the scope of the planning and delivery of 24-hour public transport services to encompass the Sydney region (Western Parkland City, Central River City and Eastern Parkland City).

Bus Services

3.98 Buses play an important role in delivering public transport right across New South Wales. According to BusNSW, the peak body for the NSW bus and coach industry, buses carried more than 157 million passengers in New South Wales in 2021-22, representing approximately 44 per cent of total public transport patronage.²⁹³

3.99 Since late 2022, all bus services in the Greater Sydney region have been delivered by private operators pursuant to Transport for NSW contracts. Under these arrangements the Government retains ownership of the bus assets and is responsible for planning and approving bus services including routes, timetables, and bus stops.²⁹⁴

3.100 As noted already, buses will be vital to ensure connectivity across Western Sydney while the metro rail and/or heavy rail services discussed earlier in the chapter are being developed and delivered. BusNSW noted the flexibility, convenience and value for money offered by buses:

Unlike heavy and light rail which take many years to plan and implement (causing traffic and community disruption), buses offer maximum flexibility. Their ability to operate at short notice along a myriad of routes and with a minimum of infrastructure spending, and their capacity to carry a variable passenger load make buses an ideal solution for the range of transport needs in Western Sydney.²⁹⁵

3.101 Inquiry participants also noted that even after rail infrastructure is installed, buses will continue to be essential to feed into rail services for those who live in areas not immediately adjacent to a rail line. For example, Mr Ben Taylor for The Parks, Sydney Parkland Councils stated that rapid bus services are needed for new development areas like Appin and Wilton in south-west Sydney until a rail line becomes available after which feeder buses would still be required:

You have places in the south...like Wilton and Appin – that at the moment have no public transport plans at all. An opportunity there is to put in a rapid bus service as a transitional arrangement until the population is at a scale that actually warrants a train line. We could actually see rapid buses be used in that sort of format across the Western Parkland City as the train line is then enhanced over time to follow and the bus network become...complementary to it. You have a network that feeds into the train line...²⁹⁶

3.102 Illustrating the importance of the bus network to the entire State, in May 2023, the Government announced the creation of the New South Wales Bus Industry Taskforce 'to

²⁹³ Submission 40, BusNSW, p 1.

²⁹⁴ Submission 40, BusNSW, p 8.

²⁹⁵ Submission 40, BusNSW, p 1.

²⁹⁶ Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, p 16. See also Evidence, Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Council (WSROC) Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 16; and Evidence, Mr David Borger, Executive Director, Business Western Sydney, 4 December 2023, p 6; and Evidence, Mr Kerry Robinson OAM, Chief Executive Officer, Blacktown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 39 where he stressed the need for integrated transport in Western Sydney incorporating all modes of transport.

improve the reliability, quality and effectiveness of bus services across NSW'.²⁹⁷ In announcing the Taskforce, Transport for NSW stated that it was comprised of industry experts, the workforce, and community representatives; was engaging with key stakeholders, seeking their views; and was also consulting directly with the community.²⁹⁸

3.103 In July 2023, the Taskforce released its first report which contained the following key recommendations:

- a refocus on delivering bus services to the community
- long-term increased funding to improve bus services to underserved communities
- greater collaboration between Transport for NSW, the bus industry and the community
- re-organising of Transport for NSW to create strategic accountability for bus services
- improving contracting for rural and regional bus services
- supporting driver recruitment and retention
- creation of a driver facilities fund and
- a refocus on providing replacement and emergency busing.²⁹⁹

3.104 In July 2023 the Taskforce also released a report focused on bus safety following the tragic bus crash in the Hunter Valley, New South Wales, on 11 June 2023.³⁰⁰ In October 2023, it handed down a second report which contained the following key recommendations:

- immediately addressing investment in school and local bus services, and additional frequent and local services
- planning for rapid bus services (like the B-Line) across Sydney where appropriate
- calling out the continued challenges with recruiting and retaining bus drivers and operational staff to ensure the growth can be matched with appropriately trained and available workforce
- a renewed focus within Transport for NSW on better asset management, risk management and safety outcomes and
- a practical plan for the roll out of electric and zero emission buses.³⁰¹

²⁹⁷ Media release, Transport for NSW, 'NSW Bus Industry Taskforce Announced', 1 May 2023.

²⁹⁸ Media release, Transport for NSW, 'NSW Bus Industry Taskforce Announced', 1 May 2023.

²⁹⁹ Transport for NSW, *Bus Industry Taskforce*, <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/industry/independent-reviews/bus-industry-taskforce#Background>.

³⁰⁰ Transport for NSW, *Bus Industry Taskforce*, <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/industry/independent-reviews/bus-industry-taskforce#Background>. See also, Bus Industry Taskforce, *First Safety Report* (July 2023), <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2023/Bus-Industry-Taskforce-Safety-Report-31-July-2023-WCAG.pdf>.

³⁰¹ Transport for NSW, *Bus Industry Taskforce*, <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/industry/independent-reviews/bus-industry-taskforce#Background>.

- 3.105** The final report of the Bus Industry Taskforce is due to be released on 1 May 2024.³⁰²

Issues and concerns with bus services in Western Sydney

- 3.106** Inquiry participants raised various concerns about the quality of bus services in Western Sydney including frequency, reliability, and connectivity – and a complete lack of services in some new development areas. They argued that such problems discourage people from using public transport thereby entrenching car dependency.
- 3.107** Mr Matt Threlkeld, Executive Director, BusNSW stated that in large parts of Western Sydney buses are the only form of public transport yet poor service frequency and coverage meant they were not 'a compelling alternative to private car'.³⁰³
- 3.108** BusNSW also cited a study by Professor David Hensher, Founding Director of the Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies at the University of Sydney Business School about the effect of bus service frequency on patronage. In short, the study established a clear link between increasing bus services and growing patronage. For example, in a case where bus service frequency was increased by 15 per cent in Western Sydney, mainly covering areas in Parramatta and close by, local bus ridership increased by 21.2 per cent in the Parramatta area.³⁰⁴
- 3.109** Local council witnesses corroborated this evidence. For example, Dr George Greiss, Chair, Mayoral Forum, The Parks, Sydney Parkland Councils noted that fewer than 1 per cent of people in the Campbelltown local government area use buses as their primary mode of transport as they are slow, indirect and infrequent, and commuter car parks at Campbelltown railway station are at capacity each morning.³⁰⁵
- 3.110** Mr Kerry Robinson OAM, Chief Executive Officer, Blacktown City Council also commented on sub-optimal bus services noting such deficiencies can entrench socio-economic disadvantage like poor health outcomes and high unemployment. He gave the example of Willmot in the Blacktown local government area which has a high proportion of public housing. Mr Robinson stated that the bus journey from Willmot to Mt Druitt railway station takes 30 to 40 minutes after which people wanting to commute to the Sydney CBD would have an hour-long journey in front of them.³⁰⁶
- 3.111** Mr Shrivankumar Guntuku, Manager, Policy and Programs, Western Sydney Community Forum, provided further real-life examples of how poor frequency, connectivity and reliability of buses can effect residents of Western Sydney accessing basic services. He stated that in one

³⁰² Transport for NSW, *Bus Industry Taskforce*, <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/industry/independent-reviews/bus-industry-taskforce#Background>.

³⁰³ Evidence, Mr Matt Threlkeld, Executive Director, BusNSW, 5 February 2024, p 36.

³⁰⁴ Answers to questions on notice, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, p 1.

³⁰⁵ Evidence, Dr Greiss, Chair, Mayoral Forum, The Parks, Sydney Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, pp 36 and 43.

³⁰⁶ Evidence, Mr Kerry Robinson OAM, Chief Executive Officer, Blacktown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 38.

case a person living in South Penrith could have reached the nearest hospital, Nepean Hospital, in 12 minutes by private car. However, if they took the bus they would have two bus changes and it would take over an hour.³⁰⁷ This accorded with the evidence of witnesses from Family Planning Australia who noted that infrequent and unreliable bus connections to their services in Newington from locations such as Lidcombe and Rhodes was impacting the ability of patients to access their reproductive and sexual health services.³⁰⁸

3.112 As touched upon above, new development areas have experienced particular problems with public transport including a complete lack of bus services – the mode of public transport that can be mobilised the most quickly. In cases where such areas are settled before bus services are made available the only transport option for people is private car therefore establishing car dependency from the start.

3.113 With regard to the new development areas of Wilton and Appin, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils stated that it is unclear when buses will be available despite there already being 2,000 houses at Wilton and people having already moved in:

For Wilton...there is a transport interchange as part of the town centre, but there is no clear plan for when the bus service will turn up. For Appin, there is a transport corridor as part of the overall structure plan. But again, we don't have the detail as yet on what that transport mode will even look like and when the buses or the trams or the trains will turn up.³⁰⁹

3.114 Mr Matt Gould, Mayor of Wollondilly Shire Council noted that he was very anxious about a doubling of the population of the Wollondilly Shire at Wilton and further population growth at Appin when there was completely insufficient infrastructure funding. He indicated that private car usage would be the only option:

We have no guarantees of any kind of rail link to Wilton. We have no certainty whatsoever on bus. We heard some utterances that there may be a rapid bus but nothing certain...A very large concern...is that we are going to have 50,000 people that are not contiguous with Greater Sydney who are going to have to rely pretty much entirely on Picton Road and the Hume Highway because there simply isn't the public transport...[I]here isn't enough infrastructure funding now to provide desperately needed basic infrastructure...at Wilton, yet we're opening up an entirely new growth area at Appin that has even less infrastructure.³¹⁰

3.115 In the Blacktown local government area, Mr Kerry Robinson stated that a similar scenario had occurred around the new development area of Elara at Marsden Park:

³⁰⁷ Evidence, Mr Shrivankumar Guntuku, Manager, Policy and Programs, Western Sydney Community Forum, 4 December 2023, p 46.

³⁰⁸ Evidence, Ms Anne Stuart, Director Planning, Education and International Programme, Family Planning Australia, 5 February 2024, p 26 and Ms Caecilia Roth, Senior Policy Officer, Family Planning Australia, 5 February 2024, p 26.

³⁰⁹ Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Council, 4 December 2023, p 20.

³¹⁰ Evidence, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, pp 25 and 26.

Unfortunately buses are funded by the State only where there is established housing. This entrenches an early pattern of car dependency in new suburbs as so many people need to move into a suburb before the bus actually turns up. A case in point is Elara at Marsden Park where the developer, Stockland, itself had to fund a bus service over 7.5 kilometres to Schofields station for more than two years before the State-funded service arrived.³¹¹

3.116 In the Liverpool area Mr Charles Wiafe, Principal Transport Planner, Liverpool City Council noted that in the developing areas of Middleton Grange and Austral bus services could not be introduced until the road network is completed. He stated: "There we run into the difficulty of residents, particularly the elderly and parents with schoolchildren, complaining that there is not adequate bus services as the developments open".³¹²

3.117 When asked about bus frequency, Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director Public Transport, Transport for NSW stated that service planning guidelines exist³¹³ and to encourage bus usage both in new development areas and in existing areas where there is not sufficient frequency Transport for NSW wants to aim towards a base frequency of 30 minutes or less. He stated:

...to get an initial level of service into those growth areas, especially as houses are still being built, we believe a 30-minute frequency should be the minimum. As those areas develop, then we want to move towards 20-minute frequencies or 15-minute frequencies. And, in certain areas, once we have a bit more contiguous development, we do want to roll out what we call our all-day frequent network, where we have frequent buses that run up to every 10 minutes or better. As you get those type of service frequencies, people don't rely on trip planning, because they know that they don't have to wait more than five or seven minutes for a bus. But the base frequency is 30 minutes or better. That's what we want to aim towards, both in existing areas where it doesn't meet that frequency but also in new areas as well.³¹⁴

3.118 Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW also stated that the number of hours in the day when buses are run affects usage. For example, where a bus is run until 6 pm each evening but people need transport at 7 pm that will be a barrier to usage. Mr Hunter stated that because of this 'part of those service planning guidelines is to look at all-day coverage options as well'.³¹⁵

3.119 Given the current issues with frequency, reliability, connectivity and even coverage, inquiry participants also stressed the importance of an integrated transport network, as discussed already. They argued that to encourage a 'mode shift' from car dependency to public transport,

³¹¹ Evidence, Mr Kerry Robinson OAM, Chief Executive Officer, Blacktown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 38.

³¹² Evidence, Mr Charles Wiafe, Principal Transport Planner, Liverpool City Council, 9 February 2024, p 23.

³¹³ Evidence, Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director Public Transport, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 36.

³¹⁴ Evidence, Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director, Public Transport, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 48.

³¹⁵ Evidence, Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW, , 9 February 2024, p 48.

it would be necessary to integrate buses properly with other modes of public transport and to implement rapid buses where possible.

- 3.120** For example, Ms Kate Stares of Campbelltown City Council noted an integrated network of public transport enabling people to access the rail spine by bus would be helpful to reduce car dependency³¹⁶ while Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue emphasised the importance of 'first and last mile connectivity' with railway stations and stated that improved buses could assist here.³¹⁷ In a similar vein, Mr Charles Casuscelli of Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd stated that Western Sydney 'needs a bus network that is tied to the rail services of Western Sydney. As deficient as they may be, we need a network of connectivity'.³¹⁸
- 3.121** On the potential of rapid buses, Mr Luke Turner, Executive Director, Policy and Advocacy, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue stated that Sydney's B-Line buses demonstrate that bus patronage can be increased quite quickly and cheaply.³¹⁹ The B-Line buses utilise a rapid bus network, providing frequent services between the Sydney CBD and Sydney's Northern Beaches.³²⁰
- 3.122** As noted earlier, rapid bus infrastructure enables buses to cover distances more quickly, moving a greater volume of people in the process.³²¹ As was also noted, the Bus Industry Taskforce has recommended planning for rapid bus services across Sydney where appropriate³²² and BusNSW also stated that in late 2023, Transport for NSW released the *On Street Transit White Paper*, which identified 39 routes that could potentially be converted to rapid bus routes. BusNSW stated that besides the rapid buses committed to in the Western Sydney City Deal, it also supported a Campbelltown to Liverpool and a St Marys to Rouse Hill rapid route as identified in the White Paper and that it considered these should be prioritised.³²³

³¹⁶ Evidence, Ms Kate Stares, Strategic Partnerships Manager, Campbelltown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 42.

³¹⁷ Evidence, Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, 4 December 2023, p 49. See also Ms Harri Bancroft, Committee for Sydney, 9 February 2024, p 25 on this point.

³¹⁸ Evidence, Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, Chief Executive Officer, WSROC, 4 December 2023, p 16.

³¹⁹ Evidence, Mr Luke Turner, Executive Director, Policy and Advocacy, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, 4 December 2024, p 45.

³²⁰ See Transport for NSW, *B-Line Bus Service*, <https://transportnsw.info/travel-info/ways-to-get-around/bus/b-line-bus-service>; and Elias Visontay and Catie McLeod, 'Parting the "Red Sea": Sydney buses would sail through intersections under automated lights plan' *The Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/oct/26/parting-the-red-sea-sydney-buses-would-sail-through-intersections-under-automated-lights-plan>.

³²¹ Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, p 17; and Answers to questions on notice, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, p 2.

³²² Transport for NSW, *Bus Industry Taskforce*, <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/industry/independent-reviews/bus-industry-taskforce#Background>.

³²³ Answers to questions on notice, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, p 2.

- 3.123** Regarding a more integrated network of public transport to improve connectivity, Mr David Borger, Executive Director, Metropolitan NSW, Business Western Sydney also advocated more of a 'trunk and feeder' style bus service for Western Sydney instead of a point to point system that incorporates indirect bus routes that 'go from point A to point B all over the city'. He explained:

I think one of the real opportunities in Western Sydney is to move away from point-to-point bus services and try to move to a trunk system where there are main corridors, regular bus movements, short headways, and then other buses feed into that trunk. It might mean that people have to catch two buses but ultimately that might mean a far better system with far more patronage.³²⁴

Provision and maintenance of bus stop infrastructure

- 3.124** Another significant factor discouraging people from using buses in Western Sydney is the subpar provision and maintenance of bus stop infrastructure.
- 3.125** Sweltering Cities, a health promotion charity that aims to reduce heat-related disease in Australian communities stated its community consultations had confirmed that a lack of sheltered bus stops across Sydney is discouraging people from catching buses.³²⁵ Executive Director Ms Emma Bacon stated that unsheltered bus stops can have serious health impacts including dehydration, sunburn and skin cancer. This is compounded by the fact that those who choose not to use them may then have limited transport options and suffer isolation and disconnection. Ms Bacon also noted that Western Sydney faces a particularly high burden of disease owing to very high temperatures in summer and other factors such as socio-economic status, age and disability.³²⁶
- 3.126** Similarly, Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney stated that improving existing bus infrastructure and thereby making the most of existing investments makes sense. He advocated bus shelters and planting trees so that patrons have shade. He also indicated that placing opal card readers at the bus stop rather than on the bus can make for more efficient services.³²⁷
- 3.127** Mr Daniel Cavallo, Acting General Manager of Cumberland City Council stated that the council had audited bus stops within his local government area identifying hundreds that should be upgraded by having a bus shelter installed. He stated that 'If someone is waiting at the bus stop to get to a shop or to get to work, that makes sense to have a shelter there. If the bus stop's primarily for people to get off the bus and go, that doesn't necessarily need a bus shelter because no-one's really staying there'.³²⁸ However, Mr Cavallo indicated that there is no

³²⁴ Evidence, Mr David Borger, Executive Director, Business Western Sydney, 4 December 2024, p 8.

³²⁵ Evidence, Ms Emma Bacon, Executive Director, Sweltering Cities, 5 February 2024, p24.

³²⁶ Evidence, Ms Emma Bacon, Executive Director, Sweltering Cities, 5 February 2024, p 30.

³²⁷ Evidence, Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 6.

³²⁸ Evidence, Mr Daniel Cavallo, Acting General Manager, Cumberland City Council, 5 February 2024, p 20.

authoritative statewide standard for bus stops in NSW that would dictate the circumstances under which a shelter is required.³²⁹

3.128 Like Mr Cavallo, Sweltering Cities remarked on the lack of a standard around bus shelters, noting there is however a standard around wheelchair accessibility. Ms Bacon stated:

There's a lot about wheelchair accessibility. So it's about whether people can get from the bus stop to an accessible bus, and that is what the standard is. As far as we can find, there is no standard around what the bus shelter itself should be like – if there should be seating, if there should be lighting, if there should be information.³³⁰

3.129 This accords with the evidence of Mr David Babineau, Tram and Bus Division Secretary, Rail, Tram and Bus Union (NSW) who noted that a white paper issued by the Bus Industry Taskforce in October 2023 was a first for articulating standards for bus stop infrastructure. He stated:

The fact that we had a white paper this year that for the first time I think in living memory articulated things like standard template construction basically for bus stops and the furniture around them, the idea that greenfield developments should incorporate bus stops and terminus, and the fact that this hasn't been considered previously is ridiculous.³³¹

3.130 When asked about bus shelters, Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director Public Transport, Transport for NSW stated that they are largely a local government responsibility and that the Government had no targets or policies to increase the number of bus shelters.³³² Transport for NSW also provided some figures around the number of sheltered bus stops in Western Sydney, stating that there are 15,807 active bus stops in Western Sydney, of which:

- 849 (five per cent) are known to have some form of shelter (e.g. awning, advertising shelter etc).
- 2,070 (13 per cent) are known to have no shelter
- for 12,888 (82 per cent) it is unknown whether a shelter is present or not.³³³

3.131 Further, on seating, Transport for NSW stated that there are 15,807 active bus stops in Western Sydney of which:

- 2,206 (14 per cent) are known to have some form of seating
- 8,299 (52.5 per cent) are known to have no seating, and
- for 5,302 (33.5 per cent) it is unknown whether they have seating or not.³³⁴

³²⁹ Evidence, Mr Daniel Cavallo, Acting General Manager, Cumberland City Council, 5 February 2024, p 19.

³³⁰ Evidence, Ms Emma Bacon, Executive Director, Sweltering Cities, 5 February 2024, p 32.

³³¹ Evidence, Mr David Babineau, Tram and Bus Divisional Secretary, Rail, Tram and Bus Union, 4 December 2024, p 67.

³³² Evidence, Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director Public Transport, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 44.

³³³ Answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, 11 March 2024, p 4.

- 3.132** In acknowledging that bus shelters are largely left to local government to fund in New South Wales, Ms Harri Bancroft, Policy Manager – Mobility, Committee for Sydney stated that this has led to an inconsistency in the quality of bus stops across local government areas.

To the question around bus stops, they're completely different all across Sydney. Sometimes it's just a pole. Sometimes you've got an amazing four seated, shaded/sheltered area. My understanding is that it comes down to these assets being funded by local government rather than State Government, which means that you're going to have a different experience dependent on whichever council area.³³⁵

- 3.133** Ms Bancroft also noted feedback from local councils that they are struggling to fund bus shelters and suggested Transport for NSW should fund or co-fund them.³³⁶

- 3.134** Sweltering Cities agreed that the quality of bus stops varied across local government areas noting that a mapping exercise it had conducted of 2,500 bus stops in Sydney identified stark differences between those present in Western Sydney and in the inner west and wealthier suburbs of Sydney. Community Campaigner, Ms Sanaa Shah noted that in the inner west only 34 per cent of bus stops lacked shade, shelter or seating whilst in the north west that figure climbed to 73 per cent.³³⁷ Ms Bacon also spoke of a particularly bad bus stop in Erskine Park within the Penrith local government area³³⁸ that had won a 'worst bus stop in Sydney' contest. She stated:

...we identified that the worst bus stop in Sydney is one in Erskine Park which is along a narrow road with lots of heavy truck traffic. There is grass just here that has snakes in it. There is no shelter or shade. It is just next to a whole lot of houses. Apparently, according to the data, two or three people use it a year, which is unsurprising since, again, there are snakes there.³³⁹

- 3.135** On funding, Sweltering Cities also confirmed that local councils were struggling to fund anywhere near enough bus shelters in Western Sydney and argued that the Government should instead fund this, with local government retaining responsibility for implementation. Ms Bacon stated:

We are advocating for the State Government to fund bus shelters, seats and public transport infrastructure across the west, specifically funding bus shelters for local government to implement. When we worked in the Penrith area, Penrith council reported that they have a budget to install four new shelters each year, which is just going to be a drop in the bucket of this problem. Blacktown council, which is another

³³⁴ Answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, 11 March 2024, p 4.

³³⁵ Evidence, Ms Harri Bancroft, Policy Manager – Mobility, Committee for Sydney, 9 February 2024, p 17.

³³⁶ Evidence, Ms Harri Bancroft, Policy Manager – Mobility, Committee for Sydney, 9 February 2024, p 17.

³³⁷ Evidence, Ms Sanaa Shah, Western Sydney Community Campaigner, Sweltering Cities, 5 February 2024, p 31.

³³⁸ See Penrith City Council, *Government & Wards*, <https://www.penrithcity.nsw.gov.au/council/council-business/government-wards>.

³³⁹ Evidence, Ms Emma Bacon, Executive Director, Sweltering Cities, 5 February 2024, p 33.

highly impacted area...has budget for one additional shelter per ward, per year. That's five new shelters per year in one of the highest growth areas of our city.³⁴⁰

3.136 Ms Emma Bacon, Sweltering Cities further stated her belief that \$20 million in the next state budget would assist to fund 2,000 shelters across Sydney, targeting such areas as schools, hospitals, aged care facilities and social housing.³⁴¹

3.137 Local council witnesses agreed that state funding was needed. Mr Jeff Roorda, Director, Infrastructure and Project Delivery Services, Blue Mountains City Council, indicated that as the Government has control of transport routes – it determines the bus routes³⁴² and controls the rail network – it should fund bus shelters.³⁴³ Similarly, Mr Daniel Cavallo, Cumberland City Council stated that there should be a specific fund to which the Government contributes to pay not only for bus shelters but for accessible bus stops more generally so that they are designed to the correct standard.³⁴⁴

3.138 In supporting state funding for bus shelters, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta also argued that developers should contribute too. She stated:

...stops and shelters that are required to be funded on State and regional roads, there should be a State Government fund. Stops and shelters that are required to be funded on local roads, councils should be able to levy developer contributions for it because one could argue there's a nexus between additional demands being generated by, say, a bunch of apartments being built on a particular bus route, and the developer should have to contribute towards transport infrastructure in that area such as bus stops and bus shelters.³⁴⁵

3.139 If a state funding contribution were made to bus shelters it is noted that the monetary benefit of any increased bus patronage would flow to the Government. Mr Matt Threlkeld, Executive Director, BusNSW confirmed that bus operators are paid based on the services procured by the Government, the rate paid is not linked to patronage or fares and 'the fare box itself goes back to the Government'.³⁴⁶

Other bus infrastructure – depots, interchanges and driver layover areas

3.140 Other bus infrastructure like adequate bus depots, interchanges and driver layover areas are also necessary to meet the growing transport needs of Western Sydney. However, BusNSW stated that improvements are 'sorely needed'.³⁴⁷

³⁴⁰ Evidence, Ms Emma Bacon, Executive Director, Sweltering Cities, 5 February 2024, p 30.

³⁴¹ Evidence, Ms Emma Bacon, Executive Director, Sweltering Cities, 5 February 2024, p 33.

³⁴² See Evidence, Mr Matt Threlkeld, Executive Director, BusNSW, 5 February 2024, p 36.

³⁴³ Evidence, Mr Jeff Roorda, Director Infrastructure and Project Delivery Services, Blue Mountains City Council, 5 February 2024, p 21.

³⁴⁴ Evidence, Mr Daniel Cavallo, Acting General Manager, Cumberland City Council, 5 February 2024, p 20.

³⁴⁵ Evidence, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta, 5 February 2024, p 20.

³⁴⁶ Evidence, Mr Matt Threlkeld, Executive Director, BusNSW, 5 February 2024, p 36.

³⁴⁷ Answers to questions on notice, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, p 5.

- 3.141** Regarding bus depots, BusNSW noted that they are crucial to ensure effective service delivery and stated 'Positioned strategically, they facilitate planned service delivery thereby enhancing both cost-effectiveness and service quality for the community'.³⁴⁸
- 3.142** However, Mr Matt Threlkeld, Executive Director stated that he thought bus depots were close to capacity in Western Sydney.³⁴⁹ BusNSW also indicated that, with the transition to zero emission buses, bus depots will need to house appropriate bus-charging infrastructure and that while some planning has been done in this area, an over-arching strategy that integrates the transition with depot capacity requirements is needed.³⁵⁰
- 3.143** In addition, BusNSW identified that the second report of the Bus Industry Taskforce has recommended that Transport for NSW immediately start to develop a long term depot strategy to assess the required locations and access needed to optimise bus service delivery and costs;³⁵¹ and BusNSW noted that this strategy should specifically consider the needs of Western Sydney.³⁵²
- 3.144** As well as bus depot improvements, BusNSW also stated that transport interchanges and driver layover areas (including toilets) need to be improved which would in turn improve working conditions for bus drivers thereby encouraging people to enter the industry.³⁵³ This accorded with the evidence of Mr Richard Olsen, State Secretary, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, who raised particular concerns about an overlay at Parramatta that he indicated was adversely affecting the health and safety of bus drivers who had to use it:
- ...we have an overlay in to, I think, Smith Street, there are two portaloos that are available for bus drivers to have their half an hour to an hour rest period and to have amenities afforded to them. There are well over 100 drivers over a 24-hour period who are required to park in that area. Up to 10 buses, I think, can be there at any one time, which is quite ridiculous.³⁵⁴
- 3.145** Again, BusNSW noted that the second report of the Bus Industry Taskforce had made relevant recommendations. First, the Taskforce recommended that Transport for NSW develop a state-wide medium term bus plan and program business case, outlining the medium term priorities and pipeline for investment for bus services and infrastructure. Secondly, the Taskforce recommended that Transport for NSW review bus-related infrastructure programs to ensure funding is adequate to meet current needs and to allow for development activities (i.e. planning, design and business cases, etc) for investment decisions to deliver the medium

³⁴⁸ Answers to questions on notice, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, p 6.

³⁴⁹ Evidence, Mr Matt Threlkeld, Executive Director, BusNSW, 5 February 2024, p 38.

³⁵⁰ Answers to questions on notice, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, p 6.

³⁵¹ Answers to questions on notice, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, p 6; see also NSW Bus Industry Taskforce, *Second Report*, (October 2023), p 23.

³⁵² Answers to questions on notice, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, p 6.

³⁵³ Answers to questions on notice, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, p 5.

³⁵⁴ Evidence, Mr Richard Olsen, State Secretary, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, 4 December 2023, p 62.

term bus plan.³⁵⁵ BusNSW indicated that it supported these recommendations with a particular focus on bus infrastructure for Western Sydney.³⁵⁶

Bus driver shortages

3.146 The inquiry heard evidence of bus driver shortages in Western Sydney and more generally across Sydney. Mr Richard Olsen, State Secretary, Transport Workers' Union of NSW stated that this shortage was a result of poor pay and conditions within the industry.³⁵⁷ Mr David Babineau, Tram and Bus Divisional Secretary, Rail, Tram and Bus Union (NSW) agreed stating that until these issues are addressed the problem will not be solved.³⁵⁸ These witnesses also argued that privatisation had worsened the situation.³⁵⁹ Since late 2022, all bus services in the Greater Sydney region have been delivered by private operators pursuant to Transport for NSW contracts.³⁶⁰

3.147 Regarding pay, Mr Richard Olsen, Transport Workers' Union of NSW stated that it is very low and that this had worsened since privatisation and the introduction of competitive tendering:

The competitive tendering, which has been set up by the previous Government, has really seen a downward spiral in relation to increases in rates of pay, which have been very minimal for years. That's a direct result of the privatisation and the competitive tendering that has been occurring within this industry.³⁶¹

3.148 Regarding conditions, Mr Olsen raised various concerns, one of which was inadequate overlay facilities for bus drivers.³⁶² In addition, he stated that when bus drivers take breaks they may be forbidden from using the air conditioning in their bus, meaning they may have to endure extreme heat or cold. They may also be rostered on split shifts.³⁶³ Similarly, Mr Olsen raised the issue of violence against bus drivers stating that not enough had been done to curb this.³⁶⁴ Mr Olsen said:

³⁵⁵ Answers to questions on notice, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, p 5; see also NSW Bus Industry Taskforce, *Second Report*, (October 2023), pp 21.

³⁵⁶ Answers to questions on notice, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, p 5.

³⁵⁷ Evidence, Mr Richard Olsen, State Secretary, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, 4 December 2023, p 63.

³⁵⁸ Evidence, Mr David Babineau, Tram and Bus Divisional Secretary, RTBU, 4 December 2023, p 67.

³⁵⁹ Evidence, Mr Richard Olsen, State Secretary, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, 4 December 2023, p 63; and Evidence, Mr David Babineau, Tram and Bus Divisional Secretary, RTBU, 4 December 2023, 4 December 2023, pp 63 and 67.

³⁶⁰ Submission 40, BusNSW, p 8.

³⁶¹ Evidence, Mr Richard Olsen, State Secretary, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, 4 December 2023, p 63.

³⁶² Evidence, Mr Richard Olsen, State Secretary, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, 4 December 2023, p 62.

³⁶³ Evidence, Mr Richard Olsen, State Secretary, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, 4 December 2023, p 63.

³⁶⁴ Evidence, Mr Richard Olsen, State Secretary, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, 4 December 2023, p 63.

I don't subscribe to the view that there is a shortage of bus drivers. There is a shortage of good paying jobs in the bus industry. Why would you want to work in an industry where you can't go to a toilet; where you can't sit in comfort for an hour's break in air conditioning, whether it's cold or heating; and where sometimes you're away doing your shift in a split shift arrangement for well over 12 hours, but you're only getting eight hours pay?³⁶⁵

3.149 Mr Richard Olsen, Transport Workers' Union of NSW and Mr David Babineau, RTBU also contended that there was inadequate training, support and career progression for bus drivers. Mr Olsen stated that once they have received their training and certificate to drive a bus, drivers receive very little training after that.³⁶⁶ Similarly, Mr Babineau stated that there was opportunity for bus driver career progression previously but privatisation had put an end to that:

One of the benefits that State Transit delivered was a little intangible, but in a non-professional industry they semi-professionalised it. If you did a couple of years at State Transit, successful driving through the guts of Sydney, to a large degree you could walk into a job at most bus operators in Sydney because the training was excellent, the environment was challenging, and you had sort of been able to operate in one of the most difficult areas in Sydney. Now that we don't have that, we are effectively just spiralling to the bottom.³⁶⁷

3.150 In discussing strategies to recruit more bus drivers Mr Matt Threlkeld, Executive Director, BusNSW agreed that salaries were 'certainly a consideration'.³⁶⁸ He explained that there is no longer a state award for bus drivers, that operators now negotiate wages and conditions with the relevant unions, and there is now some variation in the rates of pay and conditions from operator to operator.³⁶⁹ Mr Threlkeld further indicated that returning bus drivers to a standard set of industrial arrangements is being considered but that this would affect the contracts under which Transport for NSW is procuring services and other costs such as superannuation would need to be taken into account:

...because of the nature of the industry and the system, it is quite difficult with contracts in place and government funding contracts and those costs. If there was to be some form of recalibration to facilitate for wage rates to be the same for drivers in Greater Sydney, for example, then there would need to be different adjustments to payments to those operators. You would also need to consider some other costs. For example, the drivers may have different superannuation above the superannuation guarantee, just based on what has been negotiated through the enterprise agreement bargaining process. Those things would need to be considered as well if there was to be any sort of standardisation of rate.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁵ Evidence, Mr Richard Olsen, State Secretary, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, 4 December 2023, p 63.

³⁶⁶ Evidence, Mr Richard Olsen, State Secretary, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, 4 December 2023, p 63.

³⁶⁷ Evidence, Mr David Babineau, Tram and Bus Divisional Secretary, RTBU, 4 December 2023, 4 December 2023, p 63.

³⁶⁸ Evidence, Mr Matt Threlkeld, Executive Director, BusNSW, 5 February 2023, p 39.

³⁶⁹ Evidence, Mr Matt Threlkeld, Executive Director, BusNSW, 5 February 2023, p 39.

³⁷⁰ Evidence, Mr Matt Threlkeld, Executive Director, BusNSW, 5 February 2023, p 39.

- 3.151** BusNSW also highlighted that the bus industry has an ageing workforce, the average age for bus drivers being 57 years, and that there is no younger cohort to replace these older workers when they retire. BusNSW contended this is because younger Australians may perceive bus driving as a 'low value occupation' with no career path available within the industry.³⁷¹
- 3.152** Whilst noting that the Government had streamlined regulations and launched an advertising campaign to recruit more drivers, BusNSW stated that more needed to be done.³⁷² Somewhat like the union witnesses, BusNSW emphasised training pathways, health and safety and driver conditions making recommendations that Transport for NSW:
- develop a training pathway commensurate with wage increases for NSW bus drivers
 - implement a campaign to encourage the travelling public to treat drivers with courtesy and respect
 - improve driver facilities at bus layovers and driver interchanges.³⁷³

Rapid bus infrastructure

- 3.153** As noted earlier, a rapid bus network has been committed to under the Western Sydney City Deal providing connections between Liverpool, Penrith and Campbelltown and the Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport. As part of the Government's 2023 *On Street Transit White Paper*, 39 routes for potential rapid bus corridors in Sydney as part of a broader rapid bus network were recommended, with about 30 per cent of those routes being west of Parramatta.³⁷⁴
- 3.154** Inquiry participants detailed the realities of implementing rapid bus services across Western Sydney, highlighting the need for corresponding investment in, and planning for, infrastructure that ensures the service is operating accordingly and reducing car dependency and traffic congestion. For example, Mrs Alison Dench, a resident of Western Sydney expressed concern about rapid bus services being relied upon to address the growing need for public transport, emphasising that this option will require significant infrastructure spend to support efficient and reliable services:

Rapid Bus services are being relied upon to address the growing need for public transport. Many roads in Western Sydney do not have the necessary width and infrastructure to support bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and stations, and many require significant modifications or expansions such as traffic signal priority for buses, and other measures to keep buses moving. A successful rapid bus system would need to address traffic congestion issues to ensure efficient and reliable services as well as careful planning and coordination with local government.³⁷⁵

³⁷¹ Answers to questions on notice, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, p 6.

³⁷² Answers to questions on notice, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, p 6.

³⁷³ Answers to questions on notice, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, p 6.

³⁷⁴ Evidence, Mr Matt Threlkeld, Executive Director, BusNSW, 5 February 2024, p 40. See also: Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, pp 3-4.

³⁷⁵ Submission 54, Ms Ally Dench, p 10.

- 3.155** BusNSW advocated for the implementation of the routes proposed in the *On Street Transit White Paper*, in particular for Western Sydney, the upgrade of T-Ways to the new standard, routes from Campbelltown to Liverpool, St Marys to Rouse Hill as well as the rapid bus routes to the Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport.³⁷⁶
- 3.156** In response to questions about the benefits of such services, Bus NSW explained that rapid bus routes, while not as high capacity as tram or metro systems, can carry a significant number of passengers can transport anywhere from '1,000 to 5,000 passengers per hour along a single route'. This is in comparison to regular buses, which can 'typically transport anywhere from 500 to 2,000 passengers per hour' on a single route.³⁷⁷
- 3.157** BusNSW suggested that the provision of supporting infrastructure for rapid bus routes is often less complex than building metro lines, however, also noted that planning and implementation of rapid bus routes requires a comprehensive approach that considers various factors such as infrastructure, bus priority measures, stakeholder engagement, regulatory requirements, and funding.³⁷⁸

Committee comment

Frequency, reliability, and connectivity of bus services

- 3.158** The committee notes the evidence that a lack of frequency, reliability and connectivity affecting bus services in Western Sydney is discouraging public transport usage, entrenching car dependency, cutting people off from employment opportunities, and accessing services and recreational activities. It is essential that the Government explore all available options to create a more efficient, integrated network that is more attractive for people to use.
- 3.159** It is noted that Transport for NSW and the Bus Industry Taskforce have both conducted recent work supporting the establishment of further rapid bus networks across Sydney. Such work is encouraging, and the committee urges the Government to give serious consideration to all Western Sydney related proposals.
- 3.160** The committee is concerned to hear that some new development areas in Western Sydney including Wilton and Appin are opening up without any kind of public transport at all, entrenching car dependency from the start which will then be very hard to reverse. As buses are the most flexibly deployed public transport option, these areas should, at the very least, have functioning bus services from day one. The committee notes evidence from Transport for NSW that it wants to aim towards a bus frequency pattern of 30 minutes or less for new areas *and* existing areas that do not meet that frequency to encourage a reasonable level of usage.

³⁷⁶ Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, pp 3-4.

³⁷⁷ Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, pp 3-4. It was noted that capacity is dependent on factors such as vehicle size, frequency of service, and route demand.

³⁷⁸ Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, BusNSW, 7 March 2024, pp 3-4.

- 3.161** That the Government take urgent action to ensure that, at the least, bus services at a frequency of 30 minutes or less are available in:
- new development areas in Western Sydney prior to residents moving in or, in cases where they have already moved in, as soon as possible from now
 - other more established areas of Western Sydney where bus services do not yet meet this target.

Recommendation 8

That the Government take urgent action to ensure that, at the least, bus services at a frequency of 30 minutes or less are available in:

- new development areas in Western Sydney prior to residents moving in or, in cases where they have already moved in, as soon as possible from now
 - other more established areas of Western Sydney where bus services do not yet meet this target.
-

Bus stop infrastructure

- 3.162** It is acknowledged that subpar provision and maintenance of bus stop infrastructure discourages people from using buses in Western Sydney. The committee accepts that upgrades to bus stop infrastructure like providing more bus shelters make good economic sense, capitalising on the existing transport investment of the associated bus service. They are also vital for the health and safety of patrons catching buses in extreme weather, and they increase accessibility for those who may not otherwise be able to catch public transport like the elderly and people with disability.
- 3.163** It is inequitable that the quality of bus stops in Sydney differs from one local government area to another, with evidence that Western Sydney is particularly disadvantaged in this regard. It is also concerning that local councils are finding it difficult to fund anywhere near enough bus shelters in Western Sydney.
- 3.164** In the circumstances, the committee supports calls for greater state funding of bus infrastructure. The Government should seriously look at Sweltering Cities' proposal for an initial \$20 million in the next State budget to fund 2,000 shelters across Sydney. Consideration should be given to additional bus shelters in Western Sydney that are located near schools, hospitals, and aged care facilities. The committee also calls on the Government to provide ongoing dedicated funding to local councils for upgrades and maintenance of bus stop infrastructure. Improving bus infrastructure will likely lead to increased patronage flowing back to the Government in increased fare revenue.

Recommendation 9

That the Government consider:

- allocating initial funding in the next budget to fund 2,000 bus shelters across Greater Sydney, with a particular focus on Western Sydney and bus stops located near schools, hospitals, and aged care facilities
 - providing ongoing dedicated funding to local councils for upgrades and maintenance of bus stop infrastructure.
-

Bus driver shortages

- 3.165** Given the importance of buses to the transport network in Western Sydney, ongoing bus driver shortages need to be addressed. The committee is that improvements are needed within the industry. This concerns pay and other working conditions, provision of training and support and suitable career pathways. It is acknowledged that Transport for NSW has undertaken work to address recruitment and retention issues. However more needs to be done to attract sufficient bus drivers.
- 3.166** Regarding pay and conditions, a return to a standard set of pay rates and industrial conditions would be welcomed. A variation in bus driver pay and conditions from one operator to another not only has the potential to create recruitment and retention problems, it is also inequitable.
- 3.167** Evidence that some bus drivers are currently being subject to split shifts over 12 hours and prohibitions on the use of air conditioning in buses during rest breaks is problematic. Further, it was alarming to hear evidence that violence against bus drivers is not being adequately addressed. Every worker in New South Wales has the right to return home safely after each shift. The committee accepts that improvements are needed to bus infrastructure including layovers and bus interchanges to encourage recruitment and retention of bus drivers in Sydney. Again, evidence that bus drivers do not have adequate access to such basic things as toilet facilities during their breaks is completely unacceptable.
- 3.168** It is acknowledged that greater investment and planning is needed regarding bus depots, especially in the wake of a move to zero emission buses and the new infrastructure that this will entail. The committee commends the work of the Bus Industry Taskforce which has made recommendations in its second report around planning and funding of this much-needed bus infrastructure. Transport for NSW is urged to take prompt action in response.

Rapid Bus Infrastructure

- 3.169** There is an important role for rapid buses to play in meeting the current and future public transport needs of Western Sydney and there are various benefits of such services. However, it is also clear the substantial infrastructure challenges and investments required to ensure the effectiveness of rapid bus services in the region. Concerns regarding the adequacy of existing road widths and the necessity for significant modifications highlight the complexity of implementing a rapid bus system that truly reduces car dependency and alleviates traffic congestion.

3.170 There is a need for a comprehensive approach to planning, investment and implementation of rapid bus services in Western Sydney. In light of these discussions, it is clear that while rapid bus services present a viable solution for meeting the growing public transport demands in Western Sydney, their success hinges on the immediate need to invest in infrastructure that supports the service. It is recommended that the Government prioritise the delivery of a rapid bus network and commit to funding the requisite infrastructure across Western Sydney.

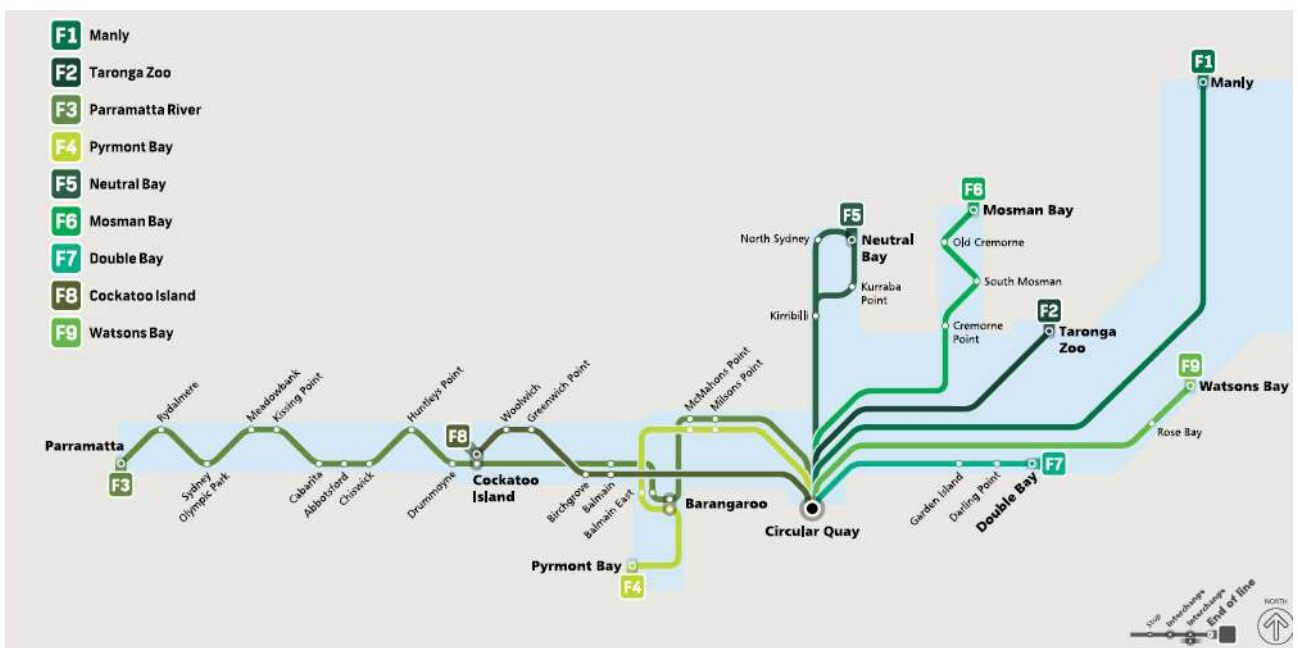
Recommendation 10

That the Government prioritise the delivery of a rapid bus network and commit to funding the requisite infrastructure across Western Sydney.

Ferries

3.171 Sydney's ferries network consists of nine lines. Relevant to this inquiry is the F3 Parramatta River line which connects Parramatta to Circular Quay in Sydney's CBD. A map of the Sydney ferries network follows.

Figure 11 Sydney Ferries network (as of April 2024)



Source: Data.NSW, Sydney Ferries Network map, <https://data.nsw.gov.au/data/dataset/2-network-maps/resource/a0bd89e0-9b2b-4e20-8faf-8cba5eadb2cc>

3.172 It was argued that the frequency and speed of the F3 Parramatta River service to Circular Quay should be improved to incentivise people to use the service over car travel. In particular, EcoTransit Sydney called for services at 30-minute intervals for most wharves along the line

and more skip-stop patterns³⁷⁹ in order to make the service 'more competitive to driving and other modes of public transportation'.³⁸⁰

- 3.173** In a similar vein, Committee for Sydney supported increased frequency and speed of services, particularly between Parramatta and the Sydney Olympic Park wharf in Wentworth Point. They emphasised that this route is a 'key connector' for people to get to jobs and services and such action 'will let more people use this service'.³⁸¹ City of Parramatta was of the same view, noting that the Council has previously advocated for these particular improvements following proposed changes to the service in 2020.³⁸²

Committee comment

- 3.174** The committee notes the evidence advocating for enhanced frequency and speed of services on the F3 Parramatta River line. The call for services at 30-minute intervals and the implementation of more skip-stop patterns are seen as crucial steps in making the ferry service a more appealing alternative to car travel and other forms of public transportation. The committee also acknowledges the importance of this route, particularly between Parramatta and the Sydney Olympic Park wharf, in facilitating access to employment and services.
- 3.175** In light of the support for enhancements in frequency and speed of the service, a detailed review of the F3 Parramatta River line's operations, including an assessment of the feasibility and potential impacts of the proposed changes, is warranted. It is recommended that the Government conduct a detailed review of F3 Parramatta River line's operations, including an assessment of the feasibility and potential impacts of increasing the frequency, speed and stopping patterns of the service.

Recommendation 11

That the Government conduct a detailed review of F3 Parramatta River line's operations, including an assessment of the feasibility and potential impacts of increasing the frequency, speed and stopping patterns of the service.

Active transport

- 3.176** Active infrastructure such as cycling and walking paths plays an important role in the current and future transport needs of Western. Like buses, active transport infrastructure is important to enable 'first and last mile connectivity' with transport hubs such as railway stations. Mr Luke Turner, Executive Director, Policy & Advocacy, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue

³⁷⁹ Skip-stop patterns is having public transport services skip stops along a certain route to reduce travel time and increase capacity.

³⁸⁰ Submission 48, EcoTransit Sydney, p 3.

³⁸¹ Submission 36, Committee for Sydney, p 3.

³⁸² Submission 47, City of Parramatta, p 3.

noted that active transport is important to interconnectivity across Western Sydney and to reducing the level of car dependency.³⁸³

3.177 However, to create this interconnectivity, Mr Turner added that better active transport was needed:

...across all of our public transport network in New South Wales we can do a lot better on...active transport...to really get uplift out of our rail network. We know we can't build trains and metros to everywhere and...we also can't build commuter car parks to solve every problem.³⁸⁴

3.178 Other inquiry participants noted a particular lack of active transport infrastructure in Western Sydney. For example, Mr David Harding, Executive Director, Policy and Advocacy, Business NSW stated that active transport remains largely a preserve of the Eastern Harbour City and that it should be given greater priority in planning and investment for Western Sydney 'especially for last-mile journeys around commercial hubbing'.³⁸⁵

3.179 Similarly, Ms Estelle Grech, Policy Manager – Planning, Committee for Sydney stated that 'In Western Sydney...there is the perception, and I've heard this in conversations, that people don't want to walk or ride a bike. Therefore, we'll just build roads. But that is a self-fulfilling prophecy that ends up in where we are today'.³⁸⁶

3.180 Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue also remarked that, unlike inner city stations, some of the railway stations in Western Sydney do not include active transport facilities such as bike-changing or e-scooter facilities and he said: 'I think if we look at the investment in active transport links historically, a lot of it is focused on inner city areas'.³⁸⁷

3.181 There were concrete examples of where active transport could play a very useful part in solving interconnectivity problems in Western Sydney. As noted earlier in the chapter, a lack of transport to Family Planning Australia services in Newington is affecting the ability of patients to access its reproductive and sexual health services, and this also impacts on staff. Ms Anne Stuart, Director, Planning, Education and International Programme at Family Planning Australia stated better active transport options could be part of the solution:

One of my staff members today was saying that even things like a safe cycle path from the stations to the Newington area. They would actually ride from Lidcombe station

³⁸³ Evidence, Mr Luke Turner, Executive Director, Policy & Advocacy, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue 4 December 2023, p 48.

³⁸⁴ Evidence, Mr Luke Turner, Executive Director, Policy & Advocacy, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue 4 December 2023, p 48.

³⁸⁵ Evidence, Mr David Harding, Executive Director, Policy and Advocacy, Business NSW, 4 December 2023, p 2.

³⁸⁶ Evidence, Ms Estelle Grech, Policy Manager – Planning, Committee for Sydney, 4 December 2023, p 18.

³⁸⁷ Evidence, Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, 4 December 2023, p 51.

or even Olympic Park, but at the moment they have to cross too many busy roads and it's just too stressful for them.³⁸⁸

- 3.182** When asked whether she would support a proposal to convert one of the rail corridors that runs from Lidcombe through to Olympic Park into a bicycle path that would cross the M4 and Parramatta Road, thereby creating connectivity between Newington and Lidcombe, Ms Stuart indicated that she would.³⁸⁹
- 3.183** Inquiry participants also discussed the link between walkability (how pedestrian or walker friendly an environment is) and public transport use, with Mrs Alison Dench, a resident of Western Sydney, expressing that poor walkability for transport is a key limiting factor for public transport use. Mrs Dench highlighted the disparity in walkability between Western Sydney and Eastern Sydney, with many LGA's in Western Sydney experiencing low scores of walkability to transport compared to Eastern Sydney.³⁹⁰
- 3.184** Mrs Dench argued that pedestrian friendly infrastructure around transport hubs is 'critical' in the designing phase of the urban environment as it encourages walking and in turn supports healthier lifestyles and reduces traffic congestion.³⁹¹
- 3.185** Committee for Sydney witnesses also stressed that in creating new development areas it is very important to include active transport infrastructure and that there had been missed opportunities in this regard. Ms Estelle Grech, Policy Manager – Planning stated:

I think there is a missed opportunity in not promoting better active transport, even, within greenfield developments. So, for example, if you go to many subdivisions in Leppington, which are about probably two kilometres from a station, even within them they don't have footpaths, they don't have bike paths, they don't have, I guess, urban design connections to the shops and things like that that exist.³⁹²

- 3.186** On this point, Mr Mick Owens, General Manager, Greenfields Development Company No.2 Pty Ltd stated that in developing Oran Park, the company had taken providing active transport infrastructure very seriously. He stated that this was of the company's own initiative although there was support from the local health district, noting the health benefits of active transport, and at a conceptual level from Planning.³⁹³ In explaining the active transport features he said:

One of our objectives for when we established the project was about making it walkable. ...We've done numerous things to make this thing work, making it as active as possible...I think we've done 150 kilometres of cycleways so far.

³⁸⁸ Evidence, Ms Anne Stuart, Director, Planning, Education and International Programme at Family Planning Australia, 5 February 2024, p 27.

³⁸⁹ Evidence, Ms Anne Stuart, Director, Planning, Education and International Programme at Family Planning Australia, 5 February 2024, p 28.

³⁹⁰ Submission 54, Ms Ally Dench, p 6.

³⁹¹ Submission 54, Ms Ally Dench, p 6.

³⁹² Evidence, Ms Estelle Grech, Policy Manager – Planning, Committee for Sydney, 9 February 2024, p 20.

³⁹³ Evidence, Mr Mick Owens, General Manager, Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 34.

This design coordination is the important thing. Where the high school and the primary school is, there is a public one. It will be within a three-minute walk to the future metro station. We had to fight to put traffic lights in and around the town centre because the policies at the time was only to put roundabouts in. Roundabouts aren't very good for pedestrians to get across major roads to get access into town centres...Every street that we do has a footpath. It is not only just putting footpaths in; it is making sure they connect.³⁹⁴

- 3.187** Discussing Western Sydney more broadly, Committee for Sydney advocated for footpaths to be built or upgraded. They explained that many residential areas in Western Sydney do not have footpaths, due to a lack of space and street designs that include large grass verges that intersect with driveways. They argued that this 'makes walking almost impossible' or unsafe for people with low mobility or prams. In other areas, they highlighted that footpaths are too narrow making it difficult or less comfortable to walk.³⁹⁵
- 3.188** To address this issue, the organisation called for State and local government collaboration on which streets should be prioritised then built or upgraded, alongside funding from the Government to achieve this.³⁹⁶
- 3.189** Ms Estelle Grech, Policy Manager – Planning, Committee for Sydney also noted the Strategic Cycleways Corridor Program, which is being progressed by Transport for NSW. According to Transport for NSW, this program will provide the foundation for safe and convenient cycleways to better connect centres, precincts and places in Sydney and support local councils' networks.³⁹⁷
- 3.190** Transport for NSW stated that the Strategic Cycleway Corridors Network has been identified for Western Sydney, in consultation with local councils and other key stakeholders, and that it is now developing the first stage of priority locations in Western Sydney.³⁹⁸
- 3.191** However, Ms Estelle Grech, Committee for Sydney stated that while the Strategic Cycleways Corridor is a good start it is only 'lines on a map' indicating the suburbs through which there needs to be a cycle route. Ms Grech argued there needs to be a proper plan pinpointing the roads that need the active transport infrastructure so that councils can apply for funds to build it. However, Ms Grech also mentioned that it would be ideal if Transport for NSW had a dedicated fund and took the lead on building the cycleways. She indicated that while consultation with councils would be essential it would assist if an agency with a statewide view actually delivered the program to ensure cycleways are properly joined up and areas are not forgotten, for example, where routes cross local government boundaries.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁴ Evidence, Mr Mick Owens, General Manager, Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 34.

³⁹⁵ Submission 36, Committee for Sydney, p 2.

³⁹⁶ Submission 36, Committee for Sydney, p 2.

³⁹⁷ Evidence, Ms Estelle Grech, Policy Manager – Planning, Committee for Sydney 9 February 2024, p 18; and answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, 11 March 2024, pp 6-7.

³⁹⁸ Answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, 11 March 2024, p 7.

³⁹⁹ Evidence, Ms Estelle Grech, Policy Manager – Planning, Committee for Sydney, 9 February 2024, p 18.

3.192 Ms Grech also provided the following illustration of the type of factors to take into account in carefully planning an active transport network:

Along busy roads like Camden Valley Way and Narellan Road, for example, you definitely need a dedicated path, and that's actually there and it's being used at the moment. But if you think of active transport infrastructure like a grid, you've got your main spines, which is the dedicated infrastructure, and then as you go further into the grid, there are different options. For example, in neighbourhood settings there might be good cause to lower speed limits, create shared road space where it is safe enough to cycle alongside cars and things like that.⁴⁰⁰

3.193 Regarding funding for active transport, Transport for NSW advised that the Government, as part of its election commitments, committed an additional \$60 million for active transport so that local councils can deliver expansions of cycleway networks and increase walking opportunities including within new developments in Western Sydney.⁴⁰¹

3.194 In addition, Transport for NSW funds local councils through grant programs like the Get NSW Active Program. This program funds the planning, development and delivery of walking and cycling infrastructure by local councils across New South Wales. It is a rolling program under which \$60 million has been allocated for the 2024-25 financial year.⁴⁰² Transport for NSW also advised that the 2023-24 New South Wales Budget allocated \$97.9 million for standalone active infrastructure projects.⁴⁰³

3.195 Transport for NSW also advised that a lot of active transport infrastructure is provided as part of major projects under the 'Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects' policy. For example, the Parramatta Light Rail project includes a 5.7 kilometre shared path between Carlingford and Parramatta.⁴⁰⁴

Committee comment

3.196 The committee notes that adequate active transport infrastructure is essential to promote interconnectivity within Western Sydney. It helps to, provide a healthy, environmentally friendly alternative to car dependency for first and last mile journeys between home and transport hubs.

3.197 Active transport should be very carefully planned taking safety, comfort and accessibility into account to encourage use. Similarly, when new development areas are created within Western Sydney there must be adequate active transport infrastructure at the outset including bicycle paths, fully connected footpaths and traffic lights.

3.198 In particular, the committee acknowledges the inadequate pedestrian infrastructure in many Western Sydney residential areas. The absence or insufficiency of footpaths, as highlighted,

⁴⁰⁰ Evidence, Ms Estelle Grech, Policy Manager – Planning, Committee for Sydney, 9 February 2024, p 18.

⁴⁰¹ Answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, 11 March 2024, p 6.

⁴⁰² Answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, 11 March 2024, p 6.

⁴⁰³ Answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, 11 March 2024, p 6.

⁴⁰⁴ Answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, 11 March 2024, p 7.

not only limits the ease of walking but also poses safety risks, particularly for individuals with limited mobility. The current condition of footpaths, where they exist, being too narrow or poorly connected due to street design requires action. The committee recommends that the Government commit to funding a program that builds and upgrades footpaths in Western Sydney that have been identified by local councils as limiting walkability, safety and connectivity to transport, services and jobs.

Recommendation 12

That the Government commit to funding a program that builds and upgrades footpaths in Western Sydney that have been identified by local councils as limiting walkability, safety and connectivity to transport, services and jobs.

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- 3.199** The committee acknowledges the work of Transport for NSW and local councils to date on the Strategic Cycleways Corridor Program which is a positive development for active transport and interconnectivity across Western Sydney and beyond.
- 3.200** While the Government has committed significant funding to active transport in New South Wales, the committee notes the disparity in the amount of active transport in Western Sydney compared to the Eastern Harbour City. Given the importance of incorporating active transport infrastructure in the new development areas of Western Sydney, the committee recommends that the Government commit to funding Sydney's Strategic Cycleway Corridors program in Western Sydney to deliver the network by 2030.

Recommendation 13

That the Government commit to funding Sydney's Strategic Cycleway Corridors in Western Sydney to deliver the network by 2030.

Chapter 4 Transport planning and delivery

This chapter explores transport planning and delivery as it currently stands in Western Sydney. It highlights concerns around inadequate planning, uncertainty in delivery, the gap between infrastructure provision, urban development and population growth, prioritisation of road networks over public transport and varying degrees of stakeholder engagement. Next, the chapter examines the need for a multifaceted approach to public transport planning and delivery that aims to address the concerns raised throughout this report, such as aligning transport with land use, reducing car dependency and improving Western Sydney's access to a connected, reliable and efficient public transport network. It concludes by discussing potential funding models to help support the delivery of public transport and alternative transport options and technologies.

Views on current transport planning and delivery

4.1 Inquiry participants offered a range of views on the Government's planning and delivery of public transport infrastructure and services in Western Sydney. This includes:

- a lack of adequate planning
- a lack of certainty
- a lag between the provision of infrastructure and services, urban development and population growth
- a prioritisation of the road network over public transport, and
- varying degrees of engagement, collaboration and transparency in public transport planning and decision-making.

Lack of adequate planning

4.2 Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) Ltd acknowledged there had been various transport plans developed, however, argued that there is 'no grand vision articulated in sufficient detail'.⁴⁰⁵

4.3 In its submission WSROC asserted that Western Sydney needs a transport plan that ties in land use, projected population growth, aspirations for investment and job creation outcomes. It was emphasised that once this plan is in place it would allow for the identification of transport priorities and facilitate greater levels of investment:

Once this end-state plan is developed we could work backwards to identify what needs to happen by when. It would allow the identification of regional transport infrastructure priorities and their optimum times for delivery, and establish the appropriate funding mechanisms to make it happen. More importantly it would

⁴⁰⁵ Evidence, Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 12.

facilitate the attraction of greater levels of investment and allow an orderly development of new higher density communities around transport nodes.⁴⁰⁶

4.4 Local councils expressed there had been inadequate planning by Government, particularly in corridor preservation and design, leaving some councils to do the 'heavy lifting' and formulate their own plans 'where they thought that Government...weren't giving enough priority'.⁴⁰⁷ As an example, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta, pointed to the Council's joint planning and design with Georges River Council of the Kogarah to Parramatta corridor (also known as the River Rail link). According to Ms Connolly, the Council's planning for the River Rail link shows 'the potential corridor and how it could perform and what sort of service it should be' and is based on 'known...corridors that Transport have been identifying 10, 20 years'.⁴⁰⁸

4.5 In a similar way, Mr Daniel Cavallo, Acting General Manager, Cumberland City Council argued 'councils have done the planning in the absence of the State'. Mr Cavallo highlighted Cumberland's Local Strategic Planning Statement which 'calls out these longer-term corridors that Government has identified – both the Parramatta to Bankstown link as well as [the] link from Westmead to Sydney'. Mr Cavallo added that 'what's missing is the leadership from the State Government to actually do the initial planning' which could influence land use and investment decisions:

That planning could influence land use, investment decisions and it could influence how we preserve that corridor for the longer term. in securing future transport corridors that could influence land use and investment decisions.⁴⁰⁹

4.6 Liverpool City Council also expressed that current infrastructure plans are inadequate to serve the number of dwellings now projected within growth precincts of its local government area. They explained that Austral and Leppington North, areas that were rezoned in 2013, are experiencing substantial growth and development, with dwelling projections significantly exceeding initial forecasts. This surge in development has prompted the Council to engage with Government over concerns that the existing infrastructure plans may not adequately support the burgeoning residential population. These concerns encompass a wide range of planning aspects, including the provision of 'open spaces, community facilities, public schools, and a retail hierarchy', as well as 'significant implications for the delivery of public transport infrastructure and services' to the new suburbs.⁴¹⁰

4.7 Mr David Borger, Executive Director, Metropolitan NSW, Business Western Sydney, was of the view that what has been lacking is 'place-based transport strategies for centre's' advocating for detailed planning to occur for local areas so that communities, suburbs, neighbourhoods are connected to the city centre and have access the heavy rail network.⁴¹¹

⁴⁰⁶ Submission 30, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd, p 10.

⁴⁰⁷ Evidence, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta, 5 February 2024, p 23.

⁴⁰⁸ Evidence, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta, 5 February 2024, p 23.

⁴⁰⁹ Evidence, Mr Daniel Cavallo, Acting General Manager, Cumberland City Council, 5 February 2024, p 23.

⁴¹⁰ Submission 33, Liverpool City Council, p 6.

⁴¹¹ Evidence, Mr David Borger, Executive Director, Metropolitan NSW, Business Western Sydney, 4 December 2023, pp 7-8.

- 4.8** Mr David Harding, Executive Director, Policy and Advocacy, Business NSW, added that 'there has been a lot of planning in Western Sydney for many years', some of which has been less successful because it did not follow 'the social and economic drivers, which is why we have transport. We don't have transport for the sake of transport'.⁴¹²
- 4.9** Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia, argued that the state has 'focused on a siloed business case for transport, with that focus on being travel time savings...rather than the power of rail infrastructure to support the creating of new employment and housing centres in between existing Central Business Districts'.⁴¹³
- 4.10** Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney, criticised the current approach to transport planning, calling for the planning process to acknowledge and embrace uncertainty:

Plans should lay out a vision, consider many alternative possible futures, preserve options and recommend the first steps to move in the direction of the preferred vision. Soon thereafter, the vision should be updated. The next steps should follow on from that revised vision. Repeat. The current process is buried under an impossible desire for exactitude and certainty; uncertainty should instead be acknowledged and embraced.⁴¹⁴

Lack of certainty

- 4.11** On the other hand, many local councils called for more certainty in public transport planning and delivery.⁴¹⁵ For example, Dr George Greiss, Chair, Mayoral Forum, The Parks, Sydney Parkland Councils, argued there had been multiple, often conflicting visions for Western Sydney, without any commitment to follow through and deliver necessary infrastructure, hindering successful planning outcomes:
- I disagree that there hasn't been a vision for Western Sydney; I think there has been many contradictory visions for Western Sydney. What there hasn't been is the commitment to carry through with any of these visions and actually deliver the infrastructure that is needed to ensure that we get a successful outcome from a planning perspective.
- 4.12** Dr Greiss argued that as result, the constantly changing visions and lack of follow-through on commitments leads to a mismatch between housing development and infrastructure, leaving newly developed areas like Wilton and Appin without adequate support:

⁴¹² Evidence, Mr David Harding, Executive Director, Policy and Advocacy, Business NSW, 4 December 2024, p 8.

⁴¹³ Evidence, Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia, 4 December 2023, p 22.

⁴¹⁴ Evidence, Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 2.

⁴¹⁵ See for example: Evidence, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 25; Evidence, Mr Charles Wiafe, Principal Transport Planner, Liverpool City Council, p 28; Evidence, Mr Todd Carney, Mayor, Penrith City Council, 9 February 2024, p 27.

So we do get a lot of announcements about housing targets and density, which we then go and implement, based on the assumption that there's going to be all of this infrastructure that will come to follow. What happens is, unfortunately, then the vision changes six months later and there's a shift. However, areas like Wilton have already been built and we can't take them back.⁴¹⁶

- 4.13** The lack of certainty in the planning and delivery of public transport in new growth areas in the south-west region was highlighted by other inquiry participants.⁴¹⁷ In discussions about the level of engagement with Government regarding public transport needs, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council declared that 'it would greatly assist Camden Council and the Oran Park community if we could have more certainty around the timing of actions'.⁴¹⁸
- 4.14** From a development industry perspective, the Urban Development Institute of Australia (NSW) recognised the scale of public transport infrastructure needed to service Western Sydney and the time it will take deliver. However, the Institute argued that in order to 'commence and deliver developments across communities in Western Sydney', the industry needs certainty in land use and public transport planning from government.⁴¹⁹
- 4.15** Likewise, Mr Mick Owens, General Manager of Greenfields Development Company, the developers of Oran Park in Sydney's southwest, emphasised the need for developers to have certainty regarding the location and timeline for the delivery of public transport infrastructure and services.⁴²⁰ Mr Owens explained that without knowing exactly where transport hubs and strategic centres are '[developers] won't see it as financially viable to do medium and high density. The financial drivers will be more low density. Knowing exactly where these things are, the development industry can respond to that'.⁴²¹

Lag between infrastructure and service provision, urban development and population growth

- 4.16** The lag between infrastructure and service provision, urban development and population growth was emphasised throughout this inquiry, with Mrs Alison Dench, a resident of Western Sydney stating, 'rapid urbanisation outpaces the development of public transport

⁴¹⁶ Evidence, Dr George Greiss, Dr George Greiss, Chair, Mayoral Forum, The Parks, Sydney Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, p 13.

⁴¹⁷ Evidence, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council, 9 February 2024, p 29, Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, p 23, Submission 68, Wollondilly Shire Council, p 1, Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, p 23.

⁴¹⁸ Evidence, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council, 9 February 2024, p 29.

⁴¹⁹ Submission 37, Urban Development Institute of Australia, p 1. See also: Evidence, Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia, 4 December 2023, p 22.

⁴²⁰ Evidence, Mr Mick Owen, General Manager, Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 31-33.

⁴²¹ Evidence, Mr Mick Owen, General Manager, Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 33.

infrastructure, leaving new communities and suburbs left bereft of adequate transportation options'.⁴²²

- 4.17** Mr Charles Wiafe, Principal Transport Planner, Liverpool City Council in acknowledging that engagement with Transport for NSW occurs, stressed that what 'tends to fail is when the public transport components come in and when its actually implemented'. Mr Wiafe highlighted that as result there is a lag in the delivery of public transport infrastructure, leaving many developing areas without access to public transport:

Middleton Grange and Austral, they are developing at the moment. They have a very, very limited bus service and Transport says, "Well, but the road network is not completed. Please wait for five, 10 years for the road network to be completed." Meanwhile you've got 20,000 people in those suburbs who say, "We want to be able to catch public transport."⁴²³

- 4.18** This was also demonstrated by inquiry participants involved in the nearly completed development of Oran Park. Mr Andrew Carfield noted that Oran Park, which was originally planned for '7,500 thousand dwellings' to accommodate '20,000 to 30,000 residents'. He further noted that there's now a plan to 'increase that by another 2,000 dwellings' through the addition of apartment buildings.⁴²⁴

- 4.19** Mr Carfield highlighted that there is anticipation of improved connectivity amongst the community as 'every one of those residents who has moved into Oran Park' is aware of the 'full-scale model depicting where the rail corridor is to be, the future railway station in Oran Park'. He highlighted that the developer, a single landowner with a lot of capacity, is designing and accommodating this rail corridor, ensuring that there won't be conflict with road accesses and arrangements, however, despite the proactive planning and community's readiness, Mr Carfield lamented, 'all that's missing is that final commitment'.⁴²⁵

- 4.20** More broadly, Mr Kerry Robinson OAM, Chief Executive Officer, Blacktown City Council emphasised that infrastructure and service provision has failed to keep up with the growth that is occurring in the local government area:

Ours is a story of growth, and we're happy to continue to accommodate that growth. However, the provision of State and Commonwealth services hasn't kept up with that growth. Whether it's public transport—as I said—whether it's higher education or whether it's any range of arts and culture services, those services, both the infrastructure and the operating budgets, have not followed that growth in population, and it needs to be redressed, including in relation to public transport provision.⁴²⁶

⁴²² Evidence, Mrs Alison Dench, Resident of Western Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 10.

⁴²³ Evidence, Mr Charles Wiafe, Principal Transport Planner, Liverpool City Council, 9 February 2024, p 27.

⁴²⁴ Evidence, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council, 9 February 2024, p 26.

⁴²⁵ Evidence, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council, 9 February 2024, p 26.

⁴²⁶ Evidence, Mr Kerry Robinson OAM, Chief Executive Officer, Blacktown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 42.

Prioritisation of roads over public transport

- 4.21** It was argued by inquiry participants that there has been a prioritisation in the planning and delivery of road infrastructure over public transport in Western Sydney.⁴²⁷ For example, Action for Public Transport Inc., argued that the 'overwhelming emphasis in Western Sydney has for decades been on increasing road space'.⁴²⁸
- 4.22** The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils was of a similar view, stating that 'it has been easier in the short term to focus on roads and this has been partly due to the perception that roads are quicker, easier and cheaper to build, but also that major road projects have been more easily adapted to a public-private partnership investment model'.⁴²⁹
- 4.23** Mr John Brockhoff, National Policy Director, Planning Institute of Australia explained that despite strategic planning for public transport, finding the necessary funds has been difficult. In contrast, road infrastructure had benefited from a 'strong succession of road authorities and strong road-planning capabilities' and the ability to use tollway funding.⁴³⁰
- 4.24** Mr Brockhoff posited that for urban fringe areas in Sydney this prioritisation had occurred because there had been a lack of political will and attention to the value created by land-use changes and urban development:

We haven't spent the political capital and spent the necessary attention that we needed to look at the value created by land-use changes and urban development on the fringe to invest in public transport infrastructure. The knowledge and capacity to know what public transport infrastructure is needed is available.⁴³¹

- 4.25** In response to questions whether public transport investment negates the need more road infrastructure in Western Sydney, Dr George Greiss, Mayor of Campbelltown argued that road infrastructure cannot be neglected in the short term as it will bring 'the city to a halt':

We are talking a very long vision here between planning Western Sydney and Campbelltown from where it is now, which is heavily car dependent, to a city that is equivalent to some of the eastern suburbs. To get from that point to where we want to be is a very long time frame, and we need to be wary of what impact it will have on our residents in the short term if we just decided to let the traffic go and bring the city to a halt.⁴³²

⁴²⁷ See for example: Submission 54, Ms Ally Dench, p 8; Submission 59, Action for Public Transport Inc., p 1; Submission 28; The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 5.

⁴²⁸ Submission 59, Action for Public Transport Inc., p 1.

⁴²⁹ Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 5.

⁴³⁰ Evidence, Mr John Brockhoff, National Policy Director, Planning Institute of Australia, 4 December 2023, pp 59-60.

⁴³¹ Evidence, Mr John Brockhoff, National Policy Director, Planning Institute of Australia, 4 December 2023, p 60.

⁴³² Evidence, Dr George Greiss, Mayor, Campbelltown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 40.

- 4.26** Likewise, Mr Kerry Robinson OAM, Chief Executive Officer, Blacktown City Council, argued that there needed to be 'a balance in terms of the investment...you need to judiciously invest in both public transport and the road network'.⁴³³

Calls for engagement, collaboration and transparency

Engagement and collaboration

- 4.27** Inquiry participants described varying degrees of engagement and collaboration with Government agencies regarding the planning and delivery of public transport services and infrastructure.⁴³⁴
- 4.28** Mr Jeff Roorda, Director – Infrastructure and Project Delivery Services, Blue Mountains City Council reported excellent levels of engagement with Transport for NSW and other government agencies, however, expressed there is a disconnect at the operational level, particularly for heavy rail.⁴³⁵
- 4.29** Mr Daniel Cavallo, Acting General Manager, Cumberland City Council, reported that at an officer level there is dialogue and discussion. Mr Cavallo added that while there are 'proactive' discussions with Transport for NSW on specific projects or initiatives with clear mandates, broader engagement on issues, such as the need for additional services in areas with planned housing growth, are constrained by the agency's existing funding mechanisms and programs.⁴³⁶
- 4.30** For the City of Parramatta, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, advised that quarterly meetings take place with Transport for NSW and similar regular meetings with the Department of Planning. Ms Connolly explained that these meetings 'arose as a result of the Parramatta Light Rail project'.⁴³⁷ She added that smaller councils have to rely on 'trying to extract personal contacts or personal interactions and trying to establish networks as a result of those'.⁴³⁸
- 4.31** Concerning the Government's intentions to increase housing density in certain areas of Western Sydney, the City of Parramatta reported there had been no discussions with the

⁴³³ Evidence, Mr Kerry Robinson OAM, Chief Executive Officer, Blacktown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 40.

⁴³⁴ See for example: Evidence, Mr Daniel Cavallo, Acting General Manager, Cumberland City Council, 5 February 2024, p 17; Evidence, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta, 5 February 2024, p 18; Evidence, Mr Jeff Roorda, Director – Infrastructure and Project Delivery Services, Blue Mountains City Council, 5 February 2024, p 19; Evidence, Mr Todd Carney, Mayor, Penrith City, 9 February 2024, p 27; Evidence, Mr Charles Wiafe, Principal Transport Planner, Liverpool City Council, 9 February 2024, p 27; Evidence, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 28.

⁴³⁵ Evidence, Mr Jeff Roorda, Director – Infrastructure and Project Delivery Services, Blue Mountains City Council, 5 February 2024, p 21.

⁴³⁶ Evidence, Mr Daniel Cavallo, Acting General Manager, Cumberland City Council, 5 February 2024, p 17.

⁴³⁷ Evidence, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta, 5 February 2024, p 18.

⁴³⁸ Evidence, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta, 5 February 2024, p 18.

Government on managing the anticipated increase in demand for public transport resulting from these housing initiatives.⁴³⁹

- 4.32** Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd, the developer of Oran Park in southwest Sydney, expressed they have a 'really good working relationship' with Transport for NSW in regard to the design coordination of the development. According to Mr Mick Owens, General Manager of the company, this design coordination, which was initiated by the company, enabled infrastructure planning in Oran Park that caters for future rail links and minimises the amount of retrofit in the future.⁴⁴⁰
- 4.33** In relation to engaging with councils on their transport needs, Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW, stated that dialogue in this area is 'case by case' and will 'depend on the level of growth in a local government area, the types of service offering and a range of other things'. Mr Hunter acknowledged that there a number of contact points and 'perhaps it's not known universally and perhaps there aren't always the answers that councils are seeking, but there is definitely an ongoing dialogue. It just takes different forms with different local government areas'.⁴⁴¹

Transparency

- 4.34** The need for transparency in transport planning and decision-making was also raised, with Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney declaring that planning and decision-making 'should be conducted openly and with transparency'.⁴⁴²
- 4.35** In discussions regarding the costs of public transport projects, Mr David Borger, Executive Director, Metropolitan NSW, Business Western Sydney, argued that there needed to be more information available to the public so that debate on these projects could be more informed:

I think one of the challenges with the debate around public transport projects is that they're often done on the basis of a lack of information in the public sphere. We certainly believe that there should be much more information—reports, studies, cost-benefits and so on—made available to the public so that we can have more informed discussions.⁴⁴³

- 4.36** Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd, detailed the difficulties he had trying to access business cases he believed existed for the entire North South Rail Link. Mr Casuscelli added that 'there seems to be a lack of transparency in what gets prioritised, and what are the assumptions that are being used in setting those priorities'.⁴⁴⁴

⁴³⁹ Answers to supplementary questions, City of Parramatta, received 18 March 2024, p 1.

⁴⁴⁰ Evidence, Mr Mick Owens, General Manager, Greenfields Development Company No.2 Pty Ltd, 4 December 2024, pp 28-29.

⁴⁴¹ Evidence, Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 46.

⁴⁴² Evidence, Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 3.

⁴⁴³ Evidence, Mr David Borger, Executive Director, Metropolitan NSW, Business Western Sydney, 4 December 2024, p 2.

⁴⁴⁴ Evidence, Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 12.

- 4.37 The following case study explores the views of inquiry participants on the issues raised above in relation to Wilton and Appin, two suburbs in Wollondilly planned for growth.

Case study Wilton and Appin

Wilton and Appin are two state-led growth areas located in the Wollondilly local government area. The areas are each expected to grow by approximately 50,000 people, with Wilton planned to accommodate 15,000 dwellings, and Appin, 19,000 dwellings.⁴⁴⁵

There is a chronic lack of public transport options in Wollondilly, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor of Wollondilly Shire Council believes: 'Our only rail access does not provide a regular and reliable service...only a tiny fraction of our shire is serviced by buses at all, and what services we do have are infrequent at best'.⁴⁴⁶

Mayor Gould believes that the area's car dependence is only going to worsen with the development of Wilton and Appin, adding that despite the area's close proximity to the new Western Sydney Airport, potential economic benefits 'will only be possible if critical transport infrastructure is provided to connect us'.⁴⁴⁷

For the Mayor, there have been 'vague promises' from the Government that there are 'lines on a map' and that there 'will be appropriate infrastructure', however, currently '[We] have nothing concrete. We have no guarantees of any kind of rail link into Wilton. We have no certainty whatsoever on bus. We heard some utterances that there may be rapid bus but nothing certain. It is very much is up in the air'.⁴⁴⁸

Mayor Gould expressed that the council has continually urged Government to deliver on public transport plans for the area, explaining that: 'At this point, we're fighting for things as basic as functional sewerage, high schools and basic public transportation. We have raised, for a number of years now, our concerns here. We have raised quite fiercely our concerns with the additional growth at Appin and the impact that that will have, but it has largely fallen on deaf ears'.⁴⁴⁹

Mr Ben Taylor, in his capacity as Chair of the General Managers Committee at the Park's, Sydney's Parkland Councils, told the committee that there are currently people living in Wilton, with 2,000 homes in Wilton, and another few thousand being developed in North Wilton. He anticipates that some of the houses in the town centre will be delivered before the commercial core, school and

⁴⁴⁵ Submission 68, Wollondilly Shire Council, p 1 and Evidence, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 28.

⁴⁴⁶ Evidence, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 24.

⁴⁴⁷ Evidence, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 24.

⁴⁴⁸ Evidence, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 25.

⁴⁴⁹ Evidence, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 28.

transport interchange, declaring that 'We'd actually rather to see it flipped on its head, so that the school and the public transport infrastructure and the jobs are delivered first'.⁴⁵⁰

Discussing planning for public transport options in Wilton, Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director Public Transport, Transport for NSW, stated 'we're acutely aware of the deficiency of services absent in that part of the world', noting that 'continual planning is undertaken to better understand travel demand and delivery mechanisms'. Mr Dessanti advised that they're 'actively looking at how we can introduce services both from a local perspective but also that connection back into the Sydney network in say, for instance, the electrified rail network from a bus perspective'.⁴⁵¹

Committee comment

- 4.38** A broad range of perspectives were provided by inquiry participants regarding how to best plan and deliver public transport infrastructure and services in Western Sydney. The planning and provision of public transport undoubtedly encompasses intricate challenges. However, it was concerning to commonly hear comments about inadequate planning; a lack of certainty; delayed infrastructure provision; prioritisation of road networks over public transport; and varying levels of engagement, collaboration, and transparency.
- 4.39** The evidence from industry and local government representatives underscores a critical need for a cohesive, long-term transport and land use plan that aligns with Western Sydney's projected population growth, economic aspirations, and the development of new communities. Such a plan would help offset concerns about recurring changes in vision without subsequent implementation. This has led to a disconnect between housing development and the requisite infrastructure needed, straining both existing communities and newly developed areas alike.
- 4.40** There is also a need for more consistent and open dialogue between government agencies, local councils, and the community. It is noted that Transport for NSW engages stakeholders in various ways across different projects and initiatives. However, it was disappointing to hear inconsistent levels of feedback from councils about their relationship with the Government. It must be said that local councils are often subject matter experts when it comes to understanding the needs of their residents.
- 4.41** The committee acknowledges evidence from various councils that have had to undertake the 'heavy lifting' in terms of transport planning due to perceived gaps in state-level planning and commitment. Local councils should not have to formulate their own transport plans in the absence of state-led planning. In light of this, coupled with varying reports of engagement and collaboration the committee finds that local councils are experts in the public transport needs of their communities and must be included as key stakeholders in the planning for housing, services and infrastructure in the local government area.

⁴⁵⁰ Evidence, Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director Public Transport, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 36.

⁴⁵¹ Evidence, Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director Public Transport, Transport for NSW, p 36.

Finding 2

Local councils are experts in the public transport needs of their communities and must be included as key stakeholders in the planning for housing, services and infrastructure in the local government area.

- 4.42 The committee notes the lag between the planning and provision of infrastructure and population growth and urban development across Western Sydney, in particular, in new growth areas in southwest Sydney. For example, the Oran Park development is nearing completion but it is still without rail access. The committee finds there has been an unacceptable delay between infrastructure planning and provision and the development of new suburbs, particularly in the southwest of Sydney, leaving many residents with limited access to public transport.

Finding 3

There has been an unacceptable delay between infrastructure planning and provision and the development of new suburbs, particularly in the southwest of Sydney, leaving many residents with limited access to public transport.

- 4.43 It is recognised that roads have historically and continue to be prioritised over public transport. However, it cannot be ignored that Western Sydney is heavily car dependent with an ever increasing need to invest in further road infrastructure. A more balanced approach to investment in road infrastructure and public transport infrastructure is essential to effectively transition residents from car travel to a public transport network that is connected, equitable, efficient and reliable. This shift would also be of benefit to the Government in meeting its net zero targets. The committee recommends that the Government prioritise the development of public transport infrastructure and services in tandem with road projects to ensure more sustainable, liveable communities and to better prepare for future population growth and to meet its net zero targets.

Recommendation 14

That the Government prioritise the development of public transport infrastructure and services in tandem with road projects to ensure more sustainable, liveable communities and to better prepare for future population growth and to meet its net zero targets.

Multifaceted approach to transport planning and delivery

- 4.44 A common theme discussed throughout this inquiry was the need for a multifaceted approach to transport planning and delivery that addresses both the current and future demand for public transport in Western Sydney. Intertwined with these discussions, were calls for the integration of land use and transport planning and delivery; together with the provision of other growth-supporting infrastructure, such as water, roads and schools. The following section examines this evidence, noting many of the issues discussed are closely related.

Short-term solutions

- 4.45** Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, argued there was a need to shift the thinking 'beyond just the major infrastructure projects' to also prioritise short-term solutions that might help address the public transport 'issues that some of those communities in some of the centres outside the major centres are currently feeling'. Mr Leto argued this includes expanding bus services and routes to improve efficiencies and reliability.⁴⁵²
- 4.46** Of a similar view, Mrs Alison Dench, a resident of Western Sydney expressed that 'new public transport infrastructure such as Metro lines is needed in Western Sydney to bridge the vulnerability gap, but in the short-term, improved bus services (new and more frequent services) in outer suburbs may ease car dependency'.⁴⁵³
- 4.47** In discussions around the benefits of utilising existing rail corridors between Parramatta and Bankstown in order to meet the demand for public transport arising from planned density increases at Berala, Mr Daniel Cavallo, Acting General Manager, Cumberland City Council, acknowledged there are longer-term benefits of this approach. However, Mr Cavallo argued that short-term solutions, such as increasing bus services, need to be considered:
- So I think longer term there's benefit of it. I think shorter term it's probably looking at other network such as the bus networks and improving that connectivity, because we know that there's significant pressure on the train network. Council wants more services.⁴⁵⁴
- 4.48** Mr Alex Claassens, State Secretary NSW, Rail, Tram and Bus Union, emphasised there should be 'proper, open and transparent conversations' about what the short to long term needs for public transport in Western Sydney are. Mr Claassens identified various short-term solutions that would increase the reliability and frequency of heavy rail services, such as signalling changes and separating freight trains from the passenger train network.⁴⁵⁵
- 4.49** Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney argued there are a lot of 'small-ball' things that could be done to improve ridership and 'make the world a little better for people'. For example, 'traffic signal priority for buses and also pedestrians can be reconfigured... this could be done overnight...it doesn't take years of planning and testing in order to do that'.⁴⁵⁶
- 4.50** Mr Simon Hickey, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport, emphasised prioritising public transport that 'can be done quite quickly' such as retiming of the Blue Mountains train line:

⁴⁵² Evidence, Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 47.

⁴⁵³ Submission 54, Ms Ally Dench, p 16.

⁴⁵⁴ Evidence, Mr Daniel Cavallo, Acting General Manager, Cumberland City Council, p 23.

⁴⁵⁵ Evidence, Mr Alex Claassens, State Secretary, Rail, Tram and Bus Union (NSW), p 62.

⁴⁵⁶ Evidence, Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 6.

When I look at what our priorities are, we say, "Let's start with what we think can be done quite quickly." The re-timing of the Blue Mountains train so that it stops at St Marys so that passengers can get to and from the CBD and Parramatta as quickly as possible would be a very good thing to do.⁴⁵⁷

Approach to long-term and strategic planning and commitment

- 4.51** Inquiry participants expressed their views on the need for, and how to, plan, both long-term and strategically to deliver transport in Western Sydney. For example, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, articulated the difficulties in long-term planning for essential infrastructure in new developments, stating, 'the Government isn't in a position or the officers aren't in a position to commit to...timings because of the fact that they can't provide funding beyond the short-term budget cycles'. This situation, he described, leads to a 'catch-22 where we can't plan adequately because we can't get firm, long-term commitments as to when the infrastructure will be provided'.⁴⁵⁸
- 4.52** Likewise, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council called for more focus on long-term planning and commitment that moves beyond the 'short-term horizon': So [the Government is] thinking in the one, two, to possibly the four-year horizon. Council and the local community would like to see a longer term planning and commitment to things'.⁴⁵⁹
- 4.53** The impact of the lack of commitment was detailed in the Camden Council's submission in relation to Narellan and its identification as a stop on the north-south rail link. According to the Council, it impedes the progress of higher density residential development in the Narellan Strategic Centre, creates uncertainty in planning for urban development and may in turn 'adversely impact the viability in committing significant capital investment in the Metro rail project'.⁴⁶⁰
- 4.54** Mrs Alison Dench, a resident of Western Sydney argued that there needed to be a 'holistic' and 'long-term approach' to planning for public infrastructure that considers future population growth, urban development, technological advancements and climate change impacts. Mrs Dench asserted that this also involves investing in sustainable and resilient infrastructure that can adapt to changing needs and conditions over time.⁴⁶¹
- 4.55** Mr David Niven, Director, City Delivery, Fairfield City Council emphasised the historical reliance on radial transport lines centred towards Sydney city, highlighting the need for strategic 'cross city' planning in the face of shifting commuting patterns in Fairfield local government area and more broadly, Western Sydney. He remarked: 'Fairfield sits on the radial line that comes out from Sydney city... Most of the public transport development within the

⁴⁵⁷ Evidence, Mr Simon Hickey, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport, p 2.

⁴⁵⁸ Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, pp 19-20.

⁴⁵⁹ Evidence, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council, 9 February 2024, p 29.

⁴⁶⁰ Submission 24, Camden Council, p 24.

⁴⁶¹ Answer to supplementary question, Mrs Alison Dench, received 27 February 2024, p 2.

city has been about feeding into the rail line to feed into Sydney city...that's the historic development land use patterns have tended to follow'.⁴⁶²

4.56 However, Mr Niven identified a critical pivot towards travel within Western Sydney commutes due to the emergence of Western Sydney's aerotropolis, causing a 'shift in the focus of where journeys have been made by the residents of Fairfield'. He argued that this has led to the public transport system being disconnected and fragmented as people try to move within Western Sydney. Highlighting the consequences of such fragmentation, he pointed out the increased car dependence among Fairfield's residents and advocated for strategic cross-city planning to address these challenges: 'One of the challenges is how do we get our strategic cross-city planning for public transport right? How do you connect Fairfield with the aerotropolis, Fairfield with Parramatta, and Fairfield with Liverpool?'.⁴⁶³

4.57 In relation to the southwest growth centre and providing public transport options, Mr John Brockhoff, National Policy Director, Planning Institute of Australia, advocated for a strategic planning approach that considers 'what our accessibility standards are' and identifies 'what is the critical enabling infrastructure necessary to achieve those standards':

[W]hat we can do better is...asking ourselves through a strategic planning lens what are our acceptable standards of access, then looking at what growth scenarios and transport scenarios will achieve those standards of access. Then, working backwards from that, what is the critical enabling infrastructure that is necessary to achieve those standards of access, whether it be investment in multiple local projects or major transit links.

If it's major transport links, we need to have the business cases. We need to identify what those critical investments are and do the business cases for them early, rather than wait until a problem emerges to do the business cases and progress those projects according to the routine ways we progress major projects now.⁴⁶⁴

4.58 Alongside early preparation of business cases for major transport projects, Mr Brockhoff expressed that there needed to be 'forward planning for density and land releases'.⁴⁶⁵

Prioritising transport needs

4.59 As explored in previous chapters, inquiry participants prioritised various public transport infrastructure and investments based on the diverse needs of residents across Western Sydney.⁴⁶⁶ More broadly, Mr Todd Carney, Mayor of Penrith City declared: 'There is a need

⁴⁶² Evidence, Mr David Niven, Director, City Delivery, Fairfield City Council, 4 December 2023, p 36.

⁴⁶³ Evidence, Mr David Niven, Director, City Delivery, Fairfield City Council, 4 December 2023, p 36.

⁴⁶⁴ Evidence, Mr John Brockhoff, National Policy Director, Planning Institute of Australia, 4 December 2023, p 59.

⁴⁶⁵ Evidence, Mr John Brockhoff, National Policy Director, Planning Institute of Australia, 4 December 2023, p 58.

⁴⁶⁶ See for example: Evidence, Mr Kerry Robinson OAM, Chief Executive Officer, Blacktown City Council, 4 December 2023, pp 37-38; Evidence, Ms Kate Stares, Strategic Partnerships Manager, Campbelltown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 40; Submission 47, City of Parramatta, p 2; Submission 27, Building Beautifully, pp 1-2; Submission 48; EcoTransit, pp 1-2.

for a better coordinated approach to infrastructure identification, prioritisation and funding delivery in line with development staging'.⁴⁶⁷

4.60 It was argued that there needed to be a focus or prioritisation of infrastructure and services to areas in Western Sydney that are anticipated for future growth. For example, Mr Simon Hickey, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney International (Nancy Bird-Walton) Airport, expressed this was crucial for connectivity of the airport for passengers and people in Western Sydney:

[W]e need to plan for and fund the growth in that network now so that the inevitable growth of the airport over the next 40 years is met by a public transport system that will provide great connectivity for local passengers and visiting tourists and, of course, for the tens of thousands of people from Western Sydney and beyond who will enjoy high-quality employment both at the airport and in the developing area around it.⁴⁶⁸

4.61 Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney argued that instead of prioritising investment in transport in areas anticipated for future growth and development, there needed to be a focus on 'where existing people are and taking better advantage of existing services and incrementally extending those services'. Professor Levinson explained 'we're building routes in greenfields that aren't going to serve very many people for a long time while there are people who currently live in places that don't have very good service'.⁴⁶⁹

4.62 Offering a different perspective, Ms Julie Walton, Convenor, Action for Public Transport argued that rather than responding to demand, there needs to be an understanding that the 'service level you provide affects what people do...you influence what happens by a cycle that you set off when you decide at the beginning that you're going to focus on a particular method of transport'.⁴⁷⁰

4.63 Likewise, Ms Harri Bancroft, Policy Manager – Mobility, Committee for Sydney, expressed that in relation to bus services it might be worth reconsidering bus service routes and frequency 'even when there's a perceived lack of demand'. Ms Bancroft adds that this would 'induce demand in the same way as we might see if we build an extra eight lanes for cars'.⁴⁷¹

4.64 Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW acknowledged that in regard to the current approach to planning for public transport 'there is care needed to balance between prioritising infrastructure and critical needs and ensuring the foundation and momentum for the future'.⁴⁷² Mr Hunter added that Transport for NSW is 'taking a close look

⁴⁶⁷ Evidence, Mr Todd Carney, Mayor, Penrith City, 9 February 2024, p 25.

⁴⁶⁸ Evidence, Mr Simon Hickey, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney International (Nancy Bird-Walton) Airport, 9 February 2024, p 2.

⁴⁶⁹ Evidence, Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 3.

⁴⁷⁰ Evidence, Ms Julie Walton, Convenor, Action for Public Transport, 9 February 2024, p 16.

⁴⁷¹ Evidence, Ms Harri Bancroft, Policy Manager – Mobility, Committee for Sydney, 9 February 2024, p 17.

⁴⁷² Evidence, Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 35.

at all of our long-term planning to make sure that these plans are aligned to the priorities and directions of the Government'.⁴⁷³

Encouraging mode shift

- 4.65** Mode share targets are goals that can be set by governments to encourage a public shift from private vehicle use towards more sustainable and efficient modes of transportation such as walking, cycling and public transport. Inquiry participants advocated for the Government's establishment of mode share targets, with varying views on how they should be implemented.⁴⁷⁴
- 4.66** Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council, argued that it is important '[to] set those long-term targets around mode shift if the State agencies are working towards a delivery against those targets'.⁴⁷⁵ In their submission, the Council called for mode share targets to be accompanied by a funded public transport infrastructure program in order to attain those targets.⁴⁷⁶
- 4.67** Liverpool City Council who has already implemented public transport mode share targets in some newly developed areas, argued that such targets 'necessitate substantial improvements in public transport infrastructure and services'. They called for collaboration with Transport for NSW to establish benchmarks for targets for various types of residential, retail centres and major employment hubs, accompanied by 'practical public transport improvement schemes, service planning and delivery actions'.⁴⁷⁷
- 4.68** Mr Ben Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Wollondilly Shire Council, pointed to the 17 per cent mode shift from car to public transport that was achieved in the B-Line on Sydney's Northern Beaches, arguing that 'the more that those mode shifts are incorporated in business cases, the more that they can actually look forward and provide a better public outcome for an area'.⁴⁷⁸
- 4.69** Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW noted that 'there aren't mode share targets we are working towards', arguing that the level of success of mode share targets depends on the 'nature of the target, the area that it applied to and the type of trip it applied to'.⁴⁷⁹
- 4.70** Mr Hunter further noted that whilst no policy objective exists in Transport for NSW to reduce car dependence, under the *Future Transport Strategy* (released in 2022), 'there was a

⁴⁷³ Evidence, Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 35.

⁴⁷⁴ See for example: Submission 33, Liverpool City Council, p 7, Submission 24, Camden Council, p 24; Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 33.

⁴⁷⁵ Evidence, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council, 9 February 2024, p 33.

⁴⁷⁶ Submission 24, Camden Council, p 24.

⁴⁷⁷ Submission 33, Liverpool City Council, p 7.

⁴⁷⁸ Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 33.

⁴⁷⁹ Evidence, Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 48.

commitment to or a direction to stabilise growth in vehicle kilometres travelled across Greater Sydney'.⁴⁸⁰

Integration of transport, land use, and other essential infrastructure

- 4.71** In response to some of the issues outlined above, inquiry participants discussed the critical need for integrating land use and transport planning and delivery. The following section explores this evidence, noting many of the issues discussed are closely related.

Calls for an integrated approach to land use and transport

- 4.72** The integration of land use and transport emerged as a central theme among inquiry participants, who emphasised the need for cohesive strategies that are cost-efficient, reduce car dependency, increase mass transit use, manage urban sprawl and respond to housing and employment needs.
- 4.73** Mr John Brockhoff, National Policy Director, Planning Institute of Australia underscored the importance of this integration, stating, an 'integrated land use and transport plan is vital for well-located growth to improve the return on public investment in services and infrastructure'.⁴⁸¹
- 4.74** Mr Tym Pieglowski also from the Planning Institute of Australia added that infrastructure should come before development and 'if that's not possible at least corridor production because then it's too expensive to retrofit'. For growth areas, Mr Pieglowski stressed 'you really want to plan for the infrastructure first before you actually develop anything'.⁴⁸²
- 4.75** Echoing the sentiment for an integrated approach, Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia highlighted shortcomings in city planning around stations on the St Marys to Western Sydney Airport Metro line, noting:

'[W]e don't know the city at any of those stations. We haven't thought about the road connections to them. We haven't thought about water. We're not taking advantage of that railway line. What will happen is we'll retrofit it over time, which means you lose value, you lose impact and you lose accessibility'.⁴⁸³

- 4.76** Mr Mann added that historically there has been a disconnect between transport planning and city planning, with a 'a focus of rail people delivering rail and city people delivering cities'. Mr Mann argued that integration of these elements and working with the development industry to achieve this integration is 'crucial'.⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁸⁰ Evidence, Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 48.

⁴⁸¹ Evidence, Mr John Brockhoff, National Policy Director, Planning Institute of Australia, p 58.

⁴⁸² Evidence, Mr Tym Pieglowski, Planning Institute of Australia, 4 December 2023, p 61.

⁴⁸³ Evidence, Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia, 4 December 2023, p 24.

⁴⁸⁴ Evidence, Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia, 4 December 2023, p 24.

- 4.77** Offering a similar point of view, Mr Sharath Mahendran, creator of the YouTube channel, Building Beautifully, expressed that 'new metro stations such as St Marys and Rosehill should have [housing] density planned in tandem with their construction in order to ensure taxpayers are getting as much bang for their buck as possible'.⁴⁸⁵
- 4.78** Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc. advocated for the alignment of transport provision with land-use policy in new suburban developments that aims to 'reduce car use for journeys of all types with higher residential densities'. They argued 'new suburbs should be created around stations on rail lines, not between them... any proposed rezoning of land that cannot be served by an existing rail line or a line for which funding is committed should be removed from planning documents'.⁴⁸⁶
- 4.79** Ms Julie Walton, Convenor of Action for Public Transport, stressed the need for policy change in order to stop the urban sprawl that is occurring in Western Sydney without access to public transport, asserting, 'it is simply a matter of a change in mindset and a change in government policy...I think we need to bite the bullet and say we got that wrong'.⁴⁸⁷
- 4.80** Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney, emphasised accessibility, which is the 'measure of how easy it is to reach valued destinations', as the core idea underlying land use and transport planning. Professor Levinson argued 'the best transport plan is a good land-use pattern', noting this approach would enable residents to work closer to home and reduce 'the large daily tidal flows of workers' commuting long distances to the east.⁴⁸⁸
- 4.81** Furthermore, Urban Taskforce highlighted that 'effective' integration of land use planning and transport infrastructure planning is 'critical' in addressing housing supply and ensuring new communities are appropriately serviced with adequate amenity and housing close to jobs and social infrastructure.⁴⁸⁹
- 4.82** Both Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure expressed that the two agencies work closely together to align transport and land use outcomes. Mrs Catherine Van Laeren, Executive Director – Metro West, Planning, Land Use, Strategy, Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure emphasised that currently they work 'really closely together because we're probably the two agencies that affect land use outcomes the most'. Mrs Van Laeren explained that 'where we are in the planning process depends on the nature of the work and how we're working together'.⁴⁹⁰
- 4.83** Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW, acknowledged the community expectation for a 'joined up approach', arguing that working with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure is 'core business':

⁴⁸⁵ Evidence, Mr Sharath Mahendran, Creator, Building Beautifully, 5 February 2024, p 9.

⁴⁸⁶ Submission 59, Action for Public Transport (NSW), p 3.

⁴⁸⁷ Evidence, Ms Julie Walton, Convenor, Action for Public Transport, p 20.

⁴⁸⁸ Evidence, Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 2.

⁴⁸⁹ Submission 29, Urban Taskforce, p 1.

⁴⁹⁰ Evidence, Mrs Catherine Van Laeren, Executive Director – Metro West, Planning, Land Use, Strategy, Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, 9 February 2024, p 42.

...[W]orking with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, to understand what the potential land use changes are and inform them with advice as to what that will impact in terms of creating demand for travel, requirements for public transport infrastructure, active transport infrastructure and services to meet the needs of those new communities is absolutely core business for us. I would say that we have regular forums at all levels between the two agencies that are about making sure we meet the community's needs and expectations around joined-up planning.⁴⁹¹

- 4.84** Responding to questions on whether land use and transport planning has historically operated in siloes, Mr Hunter commented that if there are historical disconnects 'then we're definitely working as hard as we can to make sure that the mistakes of the past aren't repeated'.⁴⁹²

Responding to housing and employment needs

- 4.85** The need for investment in transport infrastructure to align with the evolving housing and employment needs of Western Sydney residents was raised. For example, Dr George Greiss, Mayor of Campbelltown City Council noted that the local government area is expected to 'grow by over 100,000 new dwellings by 2040, representing half of all the growth in the Western Parkland City. Dr Greiss argued that in order to 'support this level of housing growth, we need correspondent investment in transport infrastructure'.⁴⁹³
- 4.86** In a similar vein, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta advised that the Council has 'resolved to support the Government's additional housing targets...to help meet current and future demand for housing in the Sydney metropolitan area. However, that support is subject to the provision of critical community infrastructure, in particular transport'.⁴⁹⁴
- 4.87** Mr Sharath Mahendran, creator of YouTube channel Building Beautifully, echoed a similar view arguing that the 'burden of housing new residents in Sydney largely rests upon areas west of Blacktown, such as Austral, Spring Farm, Marsden Park and Oran Park. Western Sydney dwellings are expected to grow by 41 per cent by 2041, without the public transport investments to show for it'.⁴⁹⁵
- 4.88** Inquiry participants also highlighted the importance of considering job creation and employment needs of Western Sydney in public transport investment decisions. For example, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council stressed that the area 'desperately needs private investment in employment-generating developments', arguing this 'will only occur when we have metro rail connections. Without these connections, Camden's jobs deficit will continue to grow'.⁴⁹⁶
- 4.89** Mr Thomas Nance, Policy and Strategy Lead, Centre for Western Sydney argued that 'we really need to talk about where jobs are concentrated, both in industrial precincts as well as

⁴⁹¹ Evidence, Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 42.

⁴⁹² Evidence, Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, 42.

⁴⁹³ Evidence, Dr George Greiss, Mayor, Campbelltown City Council, 4 December 2023, p 36.

⁴⁹⁴ Evidence, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta, 5 February 2024, p 17.

⁴⁹⁵ Evidence, Mr Sharath Mahendran, Creator, Building Beautifully, 5 February 2024, p 9.

⁴⁹⁶ Evidence, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council, 9 February 2024, p 24.

cities, to get a real sense of where the priorities are and where places need to be connected, particularly when we're looking at connections within Western Sydney'.⁴⁹⁷

Views on the Transport-Oriented Development Program

- 4.90** Linked to discussions of housing and employment, the Government's recently announced Transport-Oriented Development (TOD) program was examined by inquiry participants in the context of whether a TOD approach is adequate for Western Sydney. As noted in chapter 1, the Government's TOD Program intends to build mid to high rise housing around 39 planned or existing transport hubs in order to help 'reduce urban sprawl'.⁴⁹⁸
- 4.91** Some supported this concept, with Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia declaring that it is 'critical'. Mr Mann added that it is 'more than TOD. It's thinking about the future and the big challenges for our cities. That's climate change, jobs closer to home and liveability'.⁴⁹⁹ Mr Mann also stressed the importance of balancing housing density with diversity of product in order to respond to the housing affordability and supply crisis. He highlighted that housing affordability varies greatly among individuals and families, necessitating a diverse range of housing options.⁵⁰⁰
- 4.92** Others expressed a similar point of view, arguing that density needs to be done well. Ms Estelle Grech, Policy Manager – Planning, Committee for Sydney, explained that if 'we're going to densify around train stations, it's really good that there's a train station, but we also need to think about the costs of social infrastructure, like public spaces, child care, shops, services and entertainment'.⁵⁰¹
- 4.93** Mr Thomas Nance, Centre for Western Sydney agreed there is potential for TOD to address the 'chronic shortfall of housing' if done well. Mr Nance also acknowledged the difficulty of implementing such comprehensive planning in infill developments due to the involvement of multiple landowners, contrasting it with greenfield sites where there is more opportunity for master planning. Mr Nance stressed that realising these visions, especially in existing corridors, would require 'significant thinking and a lot of, dare I say it, political will and also community goodwill'.⁵⁰²
- 4.94** Inquiry participants also expressed concern that despite the implementation of this program, there were no measures in place to stop development occurring in the outer fringes of

⁴⁹⁷ Evidence, Mr Thomas Nance, Policy and Strategy Lead, Centre for Western Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 5.

⁴⁹⁸ NSW Government, *Transport-Oriented Development Program*, <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-12/transport-oriented-development-program.pdf>, December 2023, p 3.

⁴⁹⁹ Evidence, Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Institute of Development Australia (NSW), 4 December 2023, p 26.

⁵⁰⁰ Evidence, Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Institute of Development Australia (NSW), 4 December 2023, p 27.

⁵⁰¹ Evidence, Ms Estelle Grech, Policy Manager – Planning, Committee for Sydney, 9 February 2024, p 20.

⁵⁰² Evidence, Thomas Nance, Policy and Strategy Lead, Centre for Western Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 7.

Western Sydney. For example, Mrs Alison Dench, a resident of Western Sydney asserted that despite the program 'nothing has stopped [the urban sprawl]; if anything, it has ramped up. It's just unbelievable the amount of growth and infrastructure build that's happening without any view or thought around public transport'.⁵⁰³

4.95 Mr Sharath Mahendran, Building Beautifully, made a similar observation, stating that the building out is still occurring in places like Oran Park, Marsden Park and Bingara Gorge. Mr Mahendran advocated for the Government to 'slow the building out' in order to mitigate negative effects such as the urban heat island effect and the higher costs associated with greenfield development. Recognising that some areas have already been developed, Mr Mahendran reiterated the need to expand metro and public transport services to these regions in order to better integrate these areas into the city's transport network and address the challenges of urban sprawl.⁵⁰⁴

4.96 Mr Matt Gould, Mayor of Wollondilly Shire Council supported the concept of TOD, however, he voiced concern about the implications for Wilton and Appin, areas that are planned for significant growth:

The concern that we have is that this change in focus is going to see the infrastructure investment then move away from the previous commitments they've made, where we have the doubling of our shire happening at Wilton and we don't have that infrastructure... We're deadily concerned that what we're going to see is both of those growth areas fighting for already insufficient funding and things like public transport just won't materialise.⁵⁰⁵

4.97 Dr George Greiss, Chair, Mayoral Forum, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils opposed the move towards a TOD approach, advocating for a focus on city centre development. He emphasised the importance of enhancing job density locally, thereby reducing the necessity for residents to commute eastward for employment opportunities:

...[W]e are continuing with the same traditional model where everyone is going to wake up in the morning, hop on a train and head into Parramatta CBD or Sydney CBD—or, possibly, somewhere in the future, into the airport with the 200,000 jobs that we've heard about earlier on. But what we really should be looking at is making sure that we create jobs locally so people don't have to do that. People can then live in density, have density of jobs and have the same lifestyle as you see in the eastern suburbs.⁵⁰⁶

4.98 Going forward Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer of City of Parramatta called for councils to hold either a legislated or regulated role in the planning and delivery of the recently announced transport-oriented developments, such as the proposed Rosehill station development, as well as other major transport projects.⁵⁰⁷ Specifically, Ms Connolly expressed

⁵⁰³ Evidence, Mrs Alison Dench, Resident of Western Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 11.

⁵⁰⁴ Evidence, Mr Sharath Mahendran, Creator, Building Beautifully, 5 February 2024, p 11.

⁵⁰⁵ Evidence, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 26.

⁵⁰⁶ Evidence, Dr George Greiss, Chair, Mayoral Forum, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, 4 December 2023, p 13.

⁵⁰⁷ Evidence, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta, 5 February 2024, p 18.

that due to the level of experience at the Council they would be better placed to coordinate planning of the Rosehill precinct:

...[W]e'd be happy to take the lead role in planning the precinct both for transport and for land-use planning because we think that, at this point in time, we could probably do it better and coordinate it better than the two State agencies. We have a wealth of experience in our planning and transport teams. We are lucky we are a large council. We have the benefit of that. We can step in and take a lead role.⁵⁰⁸

4.99 To support this approach, Ms Connolly referred to precedent of this occurring for the northwest and southwest growth centres in 2005. She explained that councils were 'guaranteed buy-in to the planning and transport planning processes through the State Environmental Planning Policy'. Furthermore, Ms Connolly argued that without this legislated or regulated role, collaboration with councils on the planning and delivery of TOD precincts will be 'very ad hoc'.⁵⁰⁹

4.100 Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director Public Transport, Transport for NSW argued that the new impetus to focus on building homes around existing rail corridors 'allows us to do a lot better planning' from not only a transport or service perspective but also from an investment prioritisation perspective:

[U]nderstanding that if we're going to have an extra however-many-hundred-thousand dwellings in a particular area on a corridor, we could actually then target future service uplift on that particular corridor so that the service provision and the housing development hopefully occurs hand in hand.⁵¹⁰

4.101 In response to questioning about the consultation process in the TOD program, Mrs Catherine Van Laeren, Executive Director – Metro West, Planning, Land Use, Strategy, Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure advised that initial briefings with 'councils impacted by the TOD program commenced in December 2023. Between January and March 2024, the Department held numerous briefings with councils and councillors and sought their feedback on the TOD program on behalf of their communities'.⁵¹¹

4.102 Mrs Van Laeren added that engagement with other community and stakeholders for the first accelerated precincts will commence in the second quarter of 2024.⁵¹²

Aligned planning and provision of growth-supporting infrastructure

4.103 Linked to calls for an integrated approach to land use and transport planning, inquiry participants highlighted the need to ensure all growth-supporting infrastructure is aligned and

⁵⁰⁸ Evidence, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta, 5 February 2024, p 18.

⁵⁰⁹ Evidence, Ms Gail Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta, 5 February 2024, p 18.

⁵¹⁰ Evidence, Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director Public Transport, Transport for NSW, 9 February 2024, p 41.

⁵¹¹ Answers to questions on notice, Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, 12 March 2024, p 1.

⁵¹² Answers to questions on notice, Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, 12 March 2024, p 1.

delivered when required, particularly in areas that are planned for growth like southwest Sydney.

- 4.104** Mr Ben Taylor, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils highlighted the various impacts of growth-supporting infrastructure not being planned and delivered alongside rezoning of land that is occurring in new growth areas:

... [I]t does take some time for the infrastructure plans in detail to come to fruition. At the same time, the houses are being built on the ground and so we have extended periods of time where the houses are having to truck out effluent from the towns because of the fact that the trunk infrastructure—the Sydney Water infrastructure—is not in place. We are getting the same sort of thing now on Transport as well, where some of the roads or some of the intersections aren't able to be upgraded at the right time. As a result, that is actually slowing down housing supply because the councils can't sign off the subdivision certificates and can't sign off the [Development Applications] until certain intersections are upgraded.⁵¹³

- 4.105** The following case study examines the adequacy of school infrastructure planning, highlighting the lag in their delivery compared to population increases, the consequences for public transportation, and the calls for timely delivery of all essential infrastructure that supports growth.

Case study School infrastructure

The distances that students are expected to travel to get their neighbourhood school has increased, with an increasing number of students being driven to school by their parents and grandparents, and even fewer walking and riding a bike.

'Schools are one of those things that people should be able to walk to' according to Professor David Levinson who told the committee that there had been preference over decades, to build larger schools, with 'fewer and fewer of them per student'. This has adverse effects on children's independence and public health, along with 'needless traffic congestion' Professor Levinson argued.⁵¹⁴

Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council illustrated the broader challenge of school infrastructure lagging behind population growth in new communities: 'The first primary school that opened in Oran Park, the Oran Park Public School, on day one had 11 kindergarten classes. By the time the second primary school was opened in 2021, Oran Park Public School had swelled to 21 kindergarten classes'. Mr Carfield, argued that all essential infrastructure, including schools, transport, water and sewer, must be 'delivered when its required' in order support growth.⁵¹⁵

⁵¹³ Evidence, Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney's Parklands Councils, 4 December 2023, p 19.

⁵¹⁴ Evidence, Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 5.

⁵¹⁵ Evidence, Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council, 9 February 2024, p 29.

The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils argued that as a result of this lag, children are 'often forced to travel long distances to get to school by private vehicle'.⁵¹⁶

Blacktown City Council highlighted that to meet future needs alone, the Department of Education is projecting that 'a new primary school needs to be built every 15 months and a new high school every 20 months' arguing that this 'will create further and more significant public transport demand to ensure the schools function'.⁵¹⁷

Committee comment

- 4.106** The committee acknowledges the range of views provided on the multifaceted approach required for effective transport planning and delivery in Western Sydney. Short-term solutions, particularly those that leverage the existing public transport network, play a crucial role in addressing immediate public transport challenges. Long-term strategic planning and commitment are equally critical. The evidence from various inquiry participants highlights the challenges posed by short-term budget cycles and the resulting lack of long-term infrastructure commitments. This is problematic as it creates uncertainty in urban planning and limits the development of essential infrastructure.
- 4.107** It is noted that Transport for NSW does not have mode share targets. However, the evidence presented to this inquiry indicates that the establishment of mode share targets encourages a shift from private vehicle use to more sustainable transportation modes.
- 4.108** The successful implementation of mode share targets requires corresponding improvements to public transport infrastructure and services across the region. To that end, the committee recommends that the Government commit to mode share targets within integrated land use and transport planning considerations for Western Sydney, to encourage greater uptake of public transport.

Recommendation 15

That the Government commit to mode share targets within integrated land use and transport planning considerations for Western Sydney, to encourage greater uptake of public transport.

- 4.109** The committee notes the discussions around the Transport-Oriented Development (TOD) program and its potential role in reducing urban sprawl by aligning housing development with public transport infrastructure. The TOD program is a progressive step towards leveraging the existing public transport network, aiming to limit urban sprawl by fostering housing development around existing transport hubs. However, the committee believes that it is unacceptable that areas planned for growth, like Wilton and Appin, may be left without public transport despite prior commitments and that development in the outer fringes of Western

⁵¹⁶ Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 11.

⁵¹⁷ Submission 46, Blacktown City Council, p 2.

Sydney continues apace with limited, if any, plans for public transport provision. is still occurring.

Finding 4

That it is unacceptable that new suburbs in Western Sydney, such as Wilton and Appin, may be left without public transport despite prior commitments and that development on the outer fringes of Western Sydney continues apace with limited, if any, plans for public transport provision.

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- 4.110** The committee recognises there is an urgent need to stop further development in Western Sydney's outer fringes until existing and approved future developments have their public transport and essential service needs met. It is recommended that the Government prioritise the immediate public transport needs of existing and approved, but not yet built, areas of Western Sydney's outer fringes prior to approving more housing development in those precincts.

Recommendation 16

That the Government prioritise the immediate public transport needs of existing and approved, but not yet built, areas of Western Sydney's outer fringes prior to approving more housing development in those precincts.

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- 4.111** Furthermore, the committee notes the call for local councils to hold a legislated or regulated role in the planning and delivery of TOD precincts, something which occurred in the planning of the north west and south west growth centres in 2005. Calls for local government to take a lead role in the planning and delivery of the TOD development at Rosehill are also noted.
- 4.112** It is clear that local councils possess valuable insights and capabilities that can significantly contribute to the planning and delivery of public transport projects. There is an opportunity for councils to have a more active role in the planning and delivery of the proposed TOD precincts. On that basis, the committee recommends that the Government provide local councils with a legislated role in the planning and delivery of Transport-Oriented Development precincts in their local government area.

Recommendation 17

That the Government provide local councils with a legislated role in the planning and delivery of Transport-Oriented Development precincts in their local government area.

Innovative funding models

- 4.113** It was acknowledged throughout this inquiry that innovative funding models have a role to play in meeting the costs associated with the delivery of public transport infrastructure and

services.⁵¹⁸ As such, the following section explores inquiry participants perspectives on existing private sector contributions and other alternative funding models that could support the provision of public transport and address the region's transport needs.

Developer contributions and Works-in-Kind agreements

- 4.114** Developer contribution frameworks exist across state and local governments, whereby developers are charged a fee when new development occurs to help fund the delivery or improvement to infrastructure, including public transport. Inquiry participants discussed whether developer contributions are adequate compared to the significant increase in land value resulting from local or state government actions or investments, such as rezoning land.
- 4.115** Mr Charles Wiafe, Principal Transport Planner, Liverpool City Council was of the view that state and regional contributions 'don't come to the value of the uplift that tends to be realised with rezoning processes'.⁵¹⁹
- 4.116** Mr Matt Gould, Mayor of Wollondilly Shire Council who declared that the current infrastructure contribution scheme as 'woefully not fit for purpose', suggested at the outset of rezoning land there needs to be an infrastructure plan to ensure developers contribute fairly to the necessary services:
- There is not an agreed infrastructure plan up-front. That is the biggest shift we could see that would actually make a difference in this space. Because what happens is all too often there are vague promises made and it goes through that rezoning process. Because there is nothing binding, we then are far too reliant on developer goodwill. It really puts it into the hands of the developers as to what gets provided and when, and there is no certainty for community at all.⁵²⁰
- 4.117** The role of Works-in-Kind (WiK) agreements under the Government's Housing and Productivity Contribution framework was also discussed. Under a WiK agreement, developers can dedicate land for infrastructure or build a piece of required infrastructure rather than make a monetary contribution. Agreed works or dedication of land may be offset from the required monetary contribution.⁵²¹
- 4.118** Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) argued that under the new Housing and Productivity Contribution (H&PC) framework there is an opportunity for WiK agreements to 'become a reality' and accelerate infrastructure delivery and development in Western Sydney at 'little to no cost to the Government'.⁵²²

⁵¹⁸ See for example: Submission 24, Camden Council, p 18; Submission 33, Liverpool City Council, p 10; Submission 37, Urban Development Institute of Australia, p 10; Submission 39, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, pp 10-11.

⁵¹⁹ Evidence, Mr Charles Wiafe, Principal Transport Planner, Liverpool City Council, 9 February 2024, p 30.

⁵²⁰ Evidence, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 31.

⁵²¹ Department of Planning and Environment, *Housing and Productivity Contribution*, <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-05/housing-and-productivity-contribution.pdf>, May 2023, p 7.

⁵²² Submission 37, Urban Development Institute of Australia (NSW), p 10.

- 4.119** UDIA argued that the new H&PC framework offers funding to reimburse the 'first mover' developers who deliver in kind infrastructure. They explained that first mover developers would deliver infrastructure at their own expense and be reimbursed for expenditure through contributions to the H&PC fund, which would be replenished by later commencing developments.⁵²³
- 4.120** Mr Mick Owens, General Manager, Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd, highlighted they're already doing 'major works-in-kind arrangements' providing local facilities and roads. They argued early engagement with developers for these types of agreements can lead to effective infrastructure development, particularly when the developer is doing surrounding development.⁵²⁴

Value capture mechanisms

- 4.121** Value capture involves capturing (via taxation) some of the uplift in the value of land and property generated from actions of the Government. According to Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue (the Dialogue) value capture mechanisms can be implemented to cover 'operation costs as well as, or instead of, capital costs of public transport infrastructure'.⁵²⁵
- 4.122** The implementation of this method was discussed in the context of capturing the uplift in the value of land following announced land rezonings or transport infrastructure projects.
- 4.123** The Dialogue, expressed support for value capture models, pointing to analysis they commissioned into the different options for implementing value capture on stage 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail project. They expressed that with stage 2 of the project 'back on the agenda' for the Government 'we'd welcome a fresh debate on value capture'.⁵²⁶
- 4.124** Similarly, the Planning Institute of Australia submitted that 'public investment in mass transit infrastructure contributes to land value uplift to landowners which benefit from rezonings that are enabled' and that the organisation supports 'state and local government sharing an increment of unearned uplift to reinvest in supporting infrastructure and amenity benefits'.⁵²⁷
- 4.125** Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer of the Dialogue, added that industry would be willing to partner in value capture models, however, he argued that 'there needs to be a level of engagement with communities to make sure that the uplift and the return back to the communities sits where it needs to'.⁵²⁸

⁵²³ Submission 37, Urban Development Institute of Australia (NSW), p 10.

⁵²⁴ Evidence, Mr Mick Owens, General Manager, Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd, 4 December 2023, p 29.

⁵²⁵ Submission 39, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 11.

⁵²⁶ Submission 39, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 11. See also: Evidence, Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, 4 December 2023, p 50.

⁵²⁷ Submission 41, Planning Institute of Australia, p 5.

⁵²⁸ Evidence, Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, 4 December 2023, p 50.

4.126 Supporting this method in principle, Mr David Borger, Executive Director, Metropolitan NSW, Business Western Sydney explained that 'if you're building a \$10 billion or \$20 billion train line and there will be significant private beneficiaries, then there should be some capturing of that to help pay for the cost of it'.⁵²⁹

4.127 Likewise, Mr Charles Wiafe, Transport Planner, Liverpool City Council acknowledged the potential of value capture as a concept, however, he noted that how it is managed needs to be taken into consideration:

If there's a lot of understanding, if there is a lot of approach to be saying, "Yes, we're going to have this development; it's going to generate a need for a railway line to be constructed and a railway line needs to be funded," to me, I would think, it's something that the Government and, for that matter, this group should pursue.⁵³⁰

4.128 Concerns were raised about this funding model particularly in relation to the provision of public transport infrastructure in new greenfield development areas. Mr Matt Gould, Mayor of Wollondilly Shire Council argued there needed to be a 'balanced' approach, asserting that the value capture method 'hasn't worked' in Wilton due to the high infrastructure costs associated with the greenfield site:

Wilton was intended to be at no cost to government. It was meant to be a "developer pays value capture" type of arrangement. It really hasn't worked to the point that they've really walked away from that now. Because what ended up happening is the developers were turning around and going, "It's too expensive to do this. We can't deliver the product if we have to pay for the costs of what this infrastructure is actually going to cost."⁵³¹

4.129 Discussing the feasibility of value capture models in funding public transport infrastructure across Western Sydney, Mr Todd Carney, Mayor of Penrith called for a comprehensive review of the contributions framework, noting the current system is 'not working' or equitable:

A whole review needs to be done when it comes to all contributions, whether it's developer or a system like [value capture], to fix the system because it's not working currently. It's not working for any of our councils. Usually it's us left to kick the can, which means we have to ask for more money out of our local residents, which means we're the bad guys, and it's not always fair.⁵³²

Committee comment

4.130 The committee acknowledges the budgetary constraints faced by the Government in addressing the extensive public transport needs of Western Sydney. These constraints necessitate a careful balancing of priorities and a strategic approach to funding. The evidence highlights a significant opportunity for the Government to explore innovative funding models that can complement traditional budgetary allocations. Such models could include, but are not

⁵²⁹ Evidence, Mr David Borger, Executive Director, Business Western Sydney, 4 December 2023, p 4.

⁵³⁰ Evidence, Mr Charles Wiafe, Principal Transport Planner, 9 February 2024, p 30.

⁵³¹ Evidence, Mr Matt Gould, Mayor, Wollondilly Shire Council, 9 February 2024, p 31.

⁵³² Evidence, Mr Todd Carney, Mayor, Penrith City, 9 February 2024, p 31.

limited to, value capture mechanisms and enhanced developer contributions. These approaches could potentially unlock new streams of funding and distribute the financial burden more equitably, thereby enabling a more rapid and comprehensive development of essential transport infrastructure.

- 4.131** Given the potential of innovative funding models to address financial constraints, the committee recommends that the Government conduct a comprehensive review of the existing contributions framework. This review should aim to identify and implement innovative funding strategies, including value capture when land is rezoned, that can support the accelerated delivery of public transport infrastructure in Western Sydney, ensuring that projects are both sustainable and aligned with the region's growth.

Recommendation 18

That the Government conduct a comprehensive review of the existing contributions framework that aims to identify and implement innovative funding strategies, including value capture when land is rezoned, that can support the accelerated delivery of public transport infrastructure in Western Sydney.

Alternative transport options and technologies

- 4.132** Inquiry participants highlighted the role alternative transport options and technologies, such as micro-mobility options, on-demand services, and automated vehicles, can play in mitigating car dependency and improving the efficiency, connectivity and accessibility of public transport services.

Micro-mobility options

- 4.133** Micro-mobility services encompass a range of small, lightweight vehicles designed primarily for individual use, typically covering short distances. According to the Western Sydney Community Forum, this includes e-bikes and e-scooters, which are engineered to efficiently transport users over short distances at moderate speeds.⁵³³
- 4.134** Some inquiry participants agreed that micro-mobility options, such as e-bikes and e-scooters, have the potential to facilitate and improve connections between public transport hubs and final destinations in Western Sydney.⁵³⁴
- 4.135** Mr Shrivankumar Guntuku, Manager, Policy and Programs, Western Sydney Community Forum suggested that e-bikes could provide a viable transport option for young people in

⁵³³ Submission 34, Western Sydney Community Forum, p 9.

⁵³⁴ See for example: Submission 28, The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils, p 17, Submission 20, Australasian College of Road Safety, p 4; Submission Western Sydney Community Forum, Submission 71, Professor David Levinson, p 6; Submission 33, Liverpool City Council, p 8.

Western Sydney who are currently not engaged in active employment due to limited access to transportation.⁵³⁵

- 4.136** Other benefits of e-bikes and e-scooters were identified including increased mobility choices and reduced car dependency, traffic congestion, demand for commuter car parking and reduced emissions.⁵³⁶ Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney added that 'with the advent of e-bikes a much larger catchment area around stations is possible without relying on auto[mobiles]'.⁵³⁷
- 4.137** In support of integrating micro-mobility services with the State's public transport network, the Western Sydney Community Forum (the Forum) commented positively on both the 2022-23 e-scooter piloting program in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory establishment of shared dockless bikes and e-scooter services across various areas in Canberra.⁵³⁸ With regard to e-scooters, the Forum explained that they fall in 'legal grey area' in New South Wales under the *Road Transport Act 2013*.⁵³⁹
- 4.138** Drawing on these developments, the Forum encouraged New South Wales to consider and implement an e-scooter strategy alongside legislative reforms and requisite infrastructure to safely and effectively integrate e-scooters into Western Sydney's transport landscape.⁵⁴⁰

Other alternative transport options and technologies

- 4.139** Liverpool City Council expressed that automated vehicles and on-demand public transport, alongside other emerging micro-mobility options, 'hold the potential to enhance connectivity and accessibility to the existing public transport network and stops in Liverpool'. The Council argued that these 'innovative transport options could complement the current fixed and regular bus services, addressing the first and last-mile gaps within the existing public transport coverage areas'.⁵⁴¹
- 4.140** Similarly, the Government acknowledged the benefits of automation in the transport network, particularly within Western Sydney. For example, it was noted that there is potential for technology to reduce car dependency, the land required for parking, and traffic congestion by facilitating a range of car sharing opportunities that would traditionally only be possible with drivers tied to the vehicle, diminishing the need for individuals to own a car.⁵⁴²

⁵³⁵ Evidence, Mr Shrivankumar Guntuku, Manager, Policy and Programs, Western Sydney Community Forum, 4 December 2024, p 50.

⁵³⁶ Submission 34, Western Sydney Community Forum, p 9.

⁵³⁷ Submission 71, Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney, p 6.

⁵³⁸ Submission 34, Western Sydney Community Forum, p 9. See also: Evidence, Mr Shrivankumar Guntuku, Manager, Policy and Programs, Western Sydney Community Forum, 4 December 2024, p 49-50.

⁵³⁹ Submission 34, Western Sydney Community Forum, p 9.

⁵⁴⁰ Submission 34, Western Sydney Community Forum, p 9.

⁵⁴¹ Submission 33, Liverpool City Council, p 9.

⁵⁴² Submission 67, Transport for NSW and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, p 18.

- 4.141** Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney argued that 'we need to be aware' of automated vehicles and other emerging technologies and 'keep that in mind as part of our design process'.⁵⁴³
- 4.142** Noting that it could be up to 20 years before metro lines are built, Professor Levinson emphasised that 'automation might seem a world away but these are 15 year time lines'.⁵⁴⁴

Committee comment

- 4.143** Alternative transport solutions such as micro-mobility services have the potential, to enhance the connectivity and accessibility of public transport systems in Western Sydney. There is a growing interest in these innovative modes of transportation, which can serve as valuable complements to traditional public transport, especially in bridging the first and last-mile gaps. However, the current legislative and regulatory framework may not fully support the integration of such technologies into the existing transport network. Therefore, a legislative review is imperative to ensure the safe and effective use of micro-mobility services.

Recommendation 19

That the Government undertake a review of relevant legislation and regulations to take into consideration the growing popularity of micro-mobility services and allow for their safe and widespread integration into the public transport network in Western Sydney and more broadly, across New South Wales.

-
- 4.144** The committee also acknowledges that rapidly emerging technologies, such as automated vehicles, will have a role to play in future public transport services. The inclusion of rapidly emerging technologies, such as automated vehicles, should be a key consideration in the design and planning of public transport infrastructure. Anticipating the integration of these technologies from the outset will ensure that the transport network remains adaptable and capable of evolving with emerging trends, thereby enhancing its long-term resilience and effectiveness. It is recommended that the Government take into consideration emerging transport technologies – such as automated vehicles – as well as any associated workforce planning, safety considerations and community attitudes in the design and planning of public transport infrastructure.

Recommendation 20

That the Government take into consideration emerging transport technologies – such as automated vehicles – as well as any associated workforce planning, safety considerations and community attitudes in the design and planning of public transport infrastructure.

⁵⁴³ Evidence, Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 4.

⁵⁴⁴ Evidence, Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney, 5 February 2024, p 4.

Appendix 1 Submissions

No.	Author	Attachments
1	Name suppressed	
2	Mr John Morandini	
3	Pimbenya Ponchiengdee	
4	Mr Jeevan Shrestha	
5	Name suppressed	
6	Mr David Hauser	
7	Name suppressed	
8	Mr Edward Barnett	
9	Name suppressed	
10	Name suppressed	
11	Mr Allen Ignacio	
12	Name suppressed	
13	Mr Richard Ure	
14	Name suppressed	
15	Name suppressed	
16	J Austen	
17	Mr Richard Ure	
18	Infrastructure Technology Solutions Group	
19	Greenfields Development Company No.2 Pty Ltd	
20	Australasian College of Road Safety	
21	Campbelltown City Council	
22	Family Planning Australia	
23	Ms Dai Le	
24	Camden Council	
25	Business Council of Australia	
26	Business NSW & Business Western Sydney	
27	Building Beautifully	
28	The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils	
29	Urban Taskforce	
30	Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd	
31	Canterbury Bankstown Council	
32	Fairfield City Council	

No.	Author	Attachments
33	Liverpool City Council	
34	Western Sydney Community Forum	
35	Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA)	1
36	Committee for Sydney	
37	Urban Development Institute of Australia (NSW)	
38	Leamac Property Group	
39	Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue	
40	BusNSW	
41	Planning Institute of Australia (PIA)	
42	Barbara Coorey	
43	Cumberland City Council	
44	Blue Mountains City Council	
45	The Hills Shire Council	
46	Blacktown City Council	
47	City of Parramatta	
48	EcoTransit Sydney	
49	Name suppressed	
50	Mr Rory Sain	
51	Mr Warren Grzic	
52	The Centre for Western Sydney	
53	The Battler	
54	Ms Ally Dench	
55	Penrith City Council	
56	Name suppressed	
57	Name suppressed	
58	Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line	1
59	Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc.	1
60	Mr Peter Egan	5
61	Campbelltown Health and Education Precinct	
62	Western Sydney Airport	
63	Sweltering Cities	
64	Venues NSW	
65	The Heart Foundation	
66	Rail, Tram and Bus Union	
67	Transport for NSW & Department of Planning, Housing	

No.	Author	Attachments
	and Infrastructure	
68	Wollondilly Shire Council	
69	Transport Worker's Union of NSW	
70	Professor David Levinson	

Appendix 2 Witnesses

	Name	Position and Organisation
Monday 4 December 2023 Macquarie Room Parliament House, Sydney	Mr David Harding	Executive Director, Policy and Advocacy, Business NSW
	Mr David Borger	Executive Director, Metropolitan NSW, Business Western Sydney
	Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD	Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) Ltd
	Dr George Greiss	Chair, Mayoral Forum, The Parks, Sydney Parklands Councils
	Mr Ben Taylor	Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney Parklands Councils
	Mr Steve Mann	Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia NSW
	Mr Mick Owens	General Manager, Greenfields Development Company No.2 Pty Ltd
	Mr Mark Perich	Director, Greenfields Development Company No.2 Pty Ltd
	Mr David Niven	Director City Delivery, Fairfield City Council
	Mr Andrew Mooney	Executive Strategic Planner, Fairfield City Council
	Dr George Greiss	Mayor, Campbelltown City Council
Ms Kate Stares	Strategic Partnerships Manager, Campbelltown City Council	

Name	Position and Organisation
Mr Kerry Robinson OAM	Chief Executive Officer, Blacktown City Council
Dr Joshua Bird	Director, Policy and Programs, Western Sydney Community Forum
Mr Shravankumar Guntuku	Manager, Policy and Programs, Western Sydney Community Forum
Mr Adam Leto	Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue
Mr Luke Turner	Executive Director, Policy & Advocacy, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue
Mr Roydon Ng	Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line
Mr Steve Longhurst	Member, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA)
Mr David Reynolds	Member, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA)
Mr John Brockhoff	National Policy Director, Planning Institute of Australia (PIA)
Mr Tym Piegłowski	Planning Institute of Australia (PIA)
Mr Colin Schroeder	Committee Member, EcoTransit Sydney
Mr Matt Doherty	Committee Member, EcoTransit Sydney
Mr Alex Claassens	Branch Secretary, Rail, Tram and Bus Union (NSW)
Mr Farren Campbell	Locomotive Division Secretary, Rail, Tram and Bus Union

Name	Position and Organisation	
Mr Richard Olsen	NSW/QLD State Secretary, Transport Workers' Union of NSW	
Mr Daniel Peric	Research & Policy Official, Transport Workers' Union of NSW	
Monday 5 February 2024 Ian and Nancy Turbott Auditorium Western Sydney University, Rydalmere	Professor David Levinson	Professor of Transport, University of Sydney
	Mr Thomas Nance	Policy and Strategy Lead, Centre for Western Sydney
	Mr Sharath Mahendran	Creator, Building Beautifully
	Mrs Alison Dench	Resident of Western Sydney
	Mayor Lisa Lake	Cumberland City Council
	Mr Daniel Cavallo	Acting General Manager, Cumberland City Council
	Mr Jeff Roorda	Director – Infrastructure & Project Delivery Services, Blue Mountains City Council
	Ms Gail Connolly	Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta
	Ms Anne Stuart	Director – Planning, Education and International Programme, Family Planning Australia
	Ms Caecilia Roth	Senior Policy Officer, Family Planning Australia
Mr Michael Timms	Co-Chair NSW Chapter, Australasian College of Road Safety	
Ms Emma Bacon	Executive Director, Sweltering Cities	
Ms Sanaa Shah	Western Sydney Community Campaigner, Sweltering Cities	

	Name	Position and Organisation
	Mr John King	President, BusNSW
	Mr Matt Threlkeld	Executive Director, BusNSW
Friday 9 February 2024 Performance Studio, Campbelltown Arts Centre Campbelltown	Mr Simon Hickey	Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Airport
	Mr Scott MacKillop	Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, Western Sydney Airport
	Ms Barbara Coorey	Councillor – Canterbury Bankstown Council, Private practice solicitor and community member of various community groups concerned about the South West Metro
	Ms Estelle Grech	Policy Manager – Planning, Committee for Sydney
	Ms Harri Bancroft	Policy Manager – Mobility, Committee for Sydney
	Ms Julie Walton	Convenor, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc.
	Mr Charles Wiafe	Principal Transport Planner, Liverpool City Council
	Mayor Matt Gould	Wollondilly Shire Council
	Mr Ben Taylor	Chief Executive Officer, Wollondilly Shire Council
	Mr Andrew Carfield	General Manager, Camden Council
	Mayor Todd Carney	Penrith City Council
	Mrs Catherine Van Laeren	Executive Director – Metro West, Planning, Land Use Strategy & Housing, Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Ms Rebecca McPhee	Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Customer Operations	

Name	Position and Organisation
Ms Peta Gamon	& Outcomes, Sydney Metro Executive Director – Western Sydney Aerotropolis, Transport for NSW
Mr Simon Hunter	Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW
Mr Adrian Dessanti	Director Public Transport, Transport for NSW

Appendix 3 Minutes

Minutes no. 2

Monday 7 August 2023

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Room 1136, Parliament House, Sydney, 11.01am

1. Members present

Ms Faehrmann, *Chair*

Mr Farraway, *Deputy Chair* (via video conference)

Mr Banasiak (via video conference)

Mr Buttigieg (substituting for Mr D'Adam) (via video conference, from 11.05 am)

Dr Kaine (via video conference)

Mr Nanva (via video conference)

Mrs Ward (via video conference, until 11.17 am)

2. Previous minutes

The committee noted that draft minutes no. 1 were confirmed via email on 9 June 2023, as per a previous resolution of the committee.

3. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received

- 1 August 2023 – Letter from Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC, Hon Mark Banasiak MLC and Hon Dr Sarah Kaine PhD MLC requesting a meeting of Portfolio Committee No 6 to consider a proposed self-reference into pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impacts in New South Wales.
- 3 August 2023 – Letter from Hon Mark Banasiak MLC, Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC, Hon Natalie Ward MLC requesting a meeting of Portfolio Committee No. 6 to consider a proposed self-reference into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney.

4. Consideration of terms of reference – Pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in New South Wales

The Chair tabled a letter proposing the following terms of reference for the inquiry into pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in New South Wales:

That Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts inquire into and report on the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and the impact of these pressures on driver practice and observance of regulatory obligations in New South Wales, and in particular:

- (a) the characteristics of the heavy vehicle industry in New South Wales that shape driver practice
- (b) the current and future extent, nature and impact of pressures on driver practice and observance of regulatory obligations by heavy vehicle drivers in New South Wales, in particular:
 - (i) its contribution to the ongoing occurrence of over height vehicle incidents and
 - (ii) its impact on the use of rest areas and other fatigue management practices
- (c) the impact, effectiveness and enforcement of current mechanisms to address current and future pressures and their impacts on heavy vehicle drivers in New South Wales, in particular:
 - (i) training requirements for heavy vehicle drivers
 - (ii) training and education requirements for companies employing heavy vehicle drivers
 - (iii) penalties for over height vehicle incidents
 - (iv) other mechanisms to address over height vehicle incidents

- (v) the availability, suitability and accessibility of, and priority locations for heavy vehicle rest areas in metropolitan Sydney, and rural and regional New South Wales
 - (vi) the suitability of heavy vehicle rest areas in terms of size, facilities, lighting, signage, and safety
 - (vii) the use of heavy vehicle rest areas and emergency stopping bays for fatigue management and logbook obligations
 - (viii) the relevance, practicality and timeliness of existing heavy vehicle rest area strategies and programs given best practice fatigue management and regulatory requirements
 - (ix) identification of international best practice design guidelines and requirements for heavy vehicle rest areas and their suitability for New South Wales
 - (x) the maintenance of heavy vehicle rest areas and management of public use of heavy vehicle rest stop facilities
- (d) the capability for new and emerging technologies to assist in reducing pressures for heavy vehicle drivers and effect driver practice and observance of regulatory obligations, such as through training, implementing safety measures and fatigue management
- (e) any other related matter.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Kaine: That the committee adopt the terms of reference.

5. Conduct of the inquiry into pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in New South Wales

5.1 Closing date for submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That the closing date for submissions be Monday 18 September 2023.

5.2 Stakeholder list

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Kaine: That:

- the secretariat circulates to members the Chair's proposed list of stakeholders to be invited to make a submission
- members have two days from when the Chair's proposed list is circulated to make amendments or nominate additional stakeholders
- the committee agree to the stakeholder list by email, unless a meeting of the committee is required to resolve any disagreement.

5.3 Approach to submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Buttigieg: That to enable significant efficiencies for members and the secretariat while maintaining the integrity of how submissions are treated, in the event that 50 or more individual submissions are received, the committee may adopt the following approach to processing short submissions:

- All submissions from individuals 250 words or less in length will:
 - have an individual submission number, and be published with the author's name or as name suppressed, or kept confidential, according to the author's request
 - be reviewed by the secretariat for adverse mention and sensitive/identifying information, in accordance with practice
 - be channelled into one single document to be published on the inquiry website
- All other submissions will be processed and published as normal.

5.4 Inquiry timeline

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Faraway: That the timeline for hearings and site visits be considered by the committee following the receipt of submissions. Further, that three dates for hearings and site visits be determined by the Chair after consultation with members regarding their availability.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Kaine: That the reporting date be Friday 16 February 2024.

6. Consideration of terms of reference – Current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney

The Chair tabled a letter proposing the following terms of reference for the inquiry into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney.

1. That Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts inquire into and report on the current and future public transport needs for Western Sydney, particularly the:

- (a) availability and accessibility of public transport services across Western Sydney, the adequacy of connectivity between public transport hubs and commercial hubs and any gaps in services
- (b) current and anticipated levels of demand for public transport services and the public transport requirements to meet this demand
- (c) changing nature of public transport needs due to shifting demographics, new suburbs, planned infrastructure and increased density
- (d) social, economic and planning impacts of vehicle dependency and poorly integrated public transport
- (e) affordability compared with other areas of Greater Sydney and New South Wales and relative to means
- (f) role of public transport and future transport technologies to reduce car dependency in Western Sydney, including barriers to improving public transport services
- (g) role of the public and private sector, including local government, in public transport provision
- (h) staffing and future workforce planning, taking into account predicted service demand based on predicted population growth in Western Sydney
- (i) any other related matters.

2. The committee reports on its findings by 29 March 2024.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That paragraph 1 (g) of the terms of reference be amended by inserting the words 'and the use of innovative funding models, such as transit oriented development and value capture mechanisms' after 'including local government'.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That the committee adopt the terms of reference, as amended.

7. Conduct of the inquiry into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney

7.1 Closing date for submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Farraway: That the closing date for submissions be Monday 18 September 2023.

7.2 Stakeholder list

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That:

- the secretariat circulates to members the Chair's proposed list of stakeholders to be invited to make a submission
- members have two days from when the Chair's proposed list is circulated to make amendments or nominate additional stakeholders
- the committee agree to the stakeholder list by email, unless a meeting of the committee is required to resolve any disagreement.

7.3 Approach to submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Farraway: That to enable significant efficiencies for members and the secretariat while maintaining the integrity of how submissions are treated, in the event that 50 or more individual submissions are received, the committee may adopt the following approach to processing short submissions:

- All submissions from individuals 250 words or less in length will:

- have an individual submission number, and be published with the author's name or as name suppressed, or kept confidential, according to the author's request
- be reviewed by the secretariat for adverse mention and sensitive/identifying information, in accordance with practice
- be channelled into one single document to be published on the inquiry website
- All other submissions will be processed and published as normal.

7.4 Online questionnaire

Mr Farraway moved: That the committee use an online questionnaire to capture individuals' views, and that the draft questions be circulated to the committee for comment, with a meeting on request from any committee member if there is disagreement on the questions.

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Faehrmann, Mr Farraway

Noes: Mr Buttigieg, Dr Kaine, Mr Nanva.

Question resolved in the affirmative on the casting vote of the Chair.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That:

- the committee not accept proformas
- the media release announcing the establishment of the inquiry and emails to stakeholders note that there will be an online questionnaire to capture individuals' views
- that the following wording be included on the committee's website:
 - **Submissions**
Individuals are invited to submit their comments on the terms of reference here [[hyperlink to online questionnaire](#)]. This is a new way for individuals to participate in inquiries and it means we will no longer accept proformas.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That the secretariat prepare a summary report of responses to the online questionnaire for publication on the website and use in the report, and that:

- the committee agree to publication of the report via email, unless a member raises any concerns
- individual responses be kept confidential on tabling.

7.5 Hearing dates and site visits

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Farraway: That the timeline for hearings and site visits be considered by the committee following the receipt of submissions. Further, that two initial hearings in Sydney and Western Sydney be held by the end of November on dates to be determined by the Chair after consultation with members regarding their availability.

8. Adjournment

The committee adjourned 11.45am, *sine die*.

Rhia Victorino
Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 3

Thursday 21 September 2023

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Room 1136, Parliament House, Sydney at 1.02 pm

1. Members present

Ms Faehrmann, *Chair*

Mr Farraway, *Deputy Chair*

Mr Banasiak
 Mr Buttigieg (substituting for Mr D'Adam)
 Dr Kaine
 Mr Nanva
 Mrs Ward

2. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That draft minutes no. 2 be confirmed.

3. Inquiry into current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney

3.1 Request for documents: Report of the expert panel into Western Sydney's transport infrastructure needs

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That the committee write separately to:

- the Minister for Transport
- the Australian Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government to request that they provide the following document in their possession, custody or control by 5.00 pm, Thursday 28 September 2023: A copy of the final report of the expert panel commissioned by the Australian Government into Western Sydney's transport infrastructure needs that is in the possession of the NSW Government, as reported in the Sydney Morning Herald article 'Secret western Sydney infrastructure review ignored in federal budget', dated 2 September 2023.

4. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2023-2024 – procedural resolutions

The committee noted that the Budget Estimates timetable for 2023-2024 was agreed to by the House, with hearings generally commencing at 9.15 am and concluding by 5.30 pm. Below is a table of Portfolio Committee No. 6 hearings:

Date	Portfolio
Wednesday 1 November 2023	Regional Transport and Roads
Tuesday 7 November 2023	Transport
Thursday 9 November 2023	Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism

4.1 Allocation of question time and total hearing time

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2023-2024 resolution each portfolio, except The Legislature, be examined concurrently by Opposition and Crossbench members only from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm and 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, and, if required, by Government members only from 10.45 am to 11.00 am, 12.45 pm to 1.00 pm, and 5.15 pm to 5.30 pm.

4.2 Witness requests

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That:

- the secretariat write to the ministers of the relevant portfolios being examined by the committee to request that they:
 - nominate witnesses to appear at each hearing, for the committee's consideration, and
 - provide the committee with a list and/or organisation chart of all departmental staff at the level of Executive Director / Regional Director and above
- upon receipt, the nominated witnesses be circulated to the committee
- members be given two days from when the nominated witnesses are circulated to make amendments or nominate additional witnesses

- the committee agree to the witness list by email, unless a meeting of the committee is required to resolve any disagreement.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Faraway: That the committee defer consideration of whether to invite the parliamentary secretaries to appear as witnesses at the hearings.

4.3 Witness appearance time

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2023-2024 resolution Ministers are invited to appear for the morning sessions only, 9.15 am to 1.00 pm, unless requested by the committee to appear also for the afternoon session.

5. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 1.18 pm until Thursday 5 October 2023, Macquarie Room, Parliament House (public hearing – inquiry into pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in New South Wales).

Arizona Hart

Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 4

Thursday 5 October 2023

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney at 9.00 am

1. Members present

Ms Faehrmann, *Chair*

Mr Faraway, *Deputy Chair* (from 11.07am)

Mr Banasiak (until 4.53pm)

Mr Buttigieg (substituting for Mr D'Adam until 3pm)

Dr Kaine

Mr Murphy (substituting for Mr D'Adam from 3pm)

Mr Nanva

Ms Munro (substituting for Mrs Ward)

2. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received:

- 15 August 2023 – Correspondence from Mr Barry Jenner to the committee, titled Road Transport 2027, White Paper in response to the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW
- 30 August 2023 – Email from Mr Greg Casey, PhD Candidate – Policing, School of Social Sciences, Western Sydney University, to the committee, declining the invitation to make a submission to the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW due to incomplete research
- 30 August 2023 – Email from Mr Daniel Peric, Research & Policy Official, Transport Workers' Union of NSW to the secretariat requesting a submission extension for the inquiries into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW and the current & future public transport needs in Western Sydney
- 15 September 2023 – Email from Mr Simon O'Hara, CEO, Road Freight NSW, to the secretariat requesting a submission extension for the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW

- 15 September 2023 - Email from Mr Mitch Dudley, Manager, Parliamentary Services, Transport for NSW to the secretariat requesting a submission extension for the inquiry into current and future transport needs in Western Sydney
- 18 September 2023 - Email from Mr Mitch Dudley, Manager, Parliamentary Services, Transport for NSW to the secretariat requesting a submission extension for the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW
- 25 September 2023 - Email from Ms Justine Bouffler, Executive Assistant, Ron Finemore Transport Services Pty Ltd, to the secretariat confirming publication status of the submission from confidential to public for the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW
- 27 September 2023 – Email from Office of the Hon Chris Rath, Opposition Whip to the secretariat, advising that Ms Jacqui Munro will be substituting for Mrs Natalie Ward at the hearing on 5 October 2023 for the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW.
- 28 September 2023 – Email from Mr Mike Lenne, Chief Science & Innovation Officer, Seeing Machines to the secretariat, declining invitation to give evidence at the hearing for the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW on 5 October 2023 due to staff shortages
- 30 September 2023 – Email from the author of confidential submission no. 1, declining the invitation to appear in camera for the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW because of concerns about his company's ongoing relationship with transport regulators
- 4 October 2023 – Email from the Office of the Hon Bob Nanva, Government Whip to the secretariat, advising that Mr Buttigieg will be substituting for Mr D'Adam until 3pm, and Mr Murphy will be substituting for Mr D'Adam from 3pm for the hearing on 5 October 2023 for the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW
- 4 October 2023 – Email from Mr Brian Turpie, individual to secretariat, advising he is no longer able to appear at hearing on 5 October 2023 for the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW.

Sent:

- 30 August 2023 – Email from the secretariat to Mr Greg Casey, PhD Candidate – Policing, School of Social Sciences, Western Sydney University, acknowledging receipt of his decision to not make a submission to the inquiry into pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW due to incomplete research
- 31 August 2023 – Email from the secretariat to Mr Daniel Peric, Research & Policy Official, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, granting the submission extension date requested for the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW
- 31 August 2023 – Email from the secretariat to Mr Daniel Peric, Research & Policy Official, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, granting the submission extension date requested for the inquiry into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney
- 15 September 2023 – Email from the secretariat to Mr Simon O'Hara, CEO, Road Freight NSW, granting the submission extension date requested for the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW
- 18 September 2023 - Email from the secretariat to Mr Mitch Dudley, Manager, Parliamentary Services, Transport for NSW granting the submission extension date requested for the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW
- 19 September 2023 - Email from the secretariat to Mr Mitch Dudley, Manager, Parliamentary Services, Transport for NSW granting the submission extension date requested for the inquiry into current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney
- 22 September 2023 – Email from the secretariat to Ms Justine Bouffler, Executive Assistant & Mr Mark Parry, Managing Director, Ron Finemore Transport Services Pty Ltd, confirming the publication status of the submission for the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW

- 25 September 2023 – Correspondence from the Chair to the Hon. Jo Haylen, Minister for Transport NSW (inquiry into current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney), requesting the Minister provide the following document in their possession, custody or control by 5.00pm, Thursday 28 September 2023: A copy of the final report of the expert panel commissioned by the Australian Government into Western Sydney’s transport infrastructure needs that is in the possession of the NSW Government, as reported in the Sydney Morning Herald article ‘Secret western Sydney infrastructure review ignored in federal budget’, dated 2 September 2023
- 25 September 2023 – Correspondence from the Chair to the Hon. Catherine King, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government for NSW (inquiry into current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney), requesting that the Minister provide the following document in their possession, custody or control by 5.00pm, Thursday 28 September 2023: A copy of the final report of the expert panel commissioned by the Australian Government into Western Sydney’s transport infrastructure needs.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Buttigieg: That the committee keep confidential the correspondence dated 30 September 2023 from the author of submission no. 1 for the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW.

3. Inquiry into pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in New South Wales

3.1 Media release distribution

The committee noted the distribution of the media release to the following trucking publication media outlets:

- Big Rigs – targets road transport sector; publishes fortnightly
- Power Torque – truck and trailer magazine; bi-monthly publication
- Prime Mover Magazine – targets commercial road transport industry
- Truck and Bus News, Transport and Trucking Australia – targeted at fleet owners, service managers, owner/drivers; published bi-monthly
- Australasian Transport News (Fully Loaded) – road transport management magazine
- Owner Driver – national trucking publication

3.2 Public submissions

The committee noted the following submissions were published by the Committee Clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee: submission nos. 2, 4, 6 – 23.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That the committee authorise the publication of submission nos. 5 and 24.

3.3 Partially confidential submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Munro: That the committee authorise the publication of submission no. 3, with the exception of potential adverse mention, which is to remain confidential, as per the recommendation of the secretariat.

3.4 Confidential submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Buttigieg: That the committee keep submission no. 1 confidential, as per the request of the author as it contains identifying and/or sensitive information.

3.5 Public hearing

Sequence of questions

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Kaine: That the allocation of questions to be asked at the hearing be left in the hands of the Chair.

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding the broadcasting of proceedings and other matters.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Gavin Webb, Chief Legal Officer, Transport Workers' Union NSW
- Mr Daniel Peric, Research & Policy Official, Transport Workers' Union NSW

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Rod Hannifey, President, National Road Freighters Association Inc. (via Webex)
- Ms Julie Downey, Board Member, National Road Freighters Association Inc. (via Webex)
- Mr Paul Pulver, Immediate Past President, Livestock Bulk and Rural Carriers Association (via Webex)
- Mr Simon O'Hara, CEO, Road Freight NSW (via Webex)

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Samuel Marks, Policy Director, NatRoad (National Road Transport Association)
- Mr Paul Davies, General Manager Programs, Austroads (via Webex)
- Mr Gavin Hill, Acting Chief Executive, Austroads

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witness was sworn and examined:

- Mr Trevor Warner, Long distance truck driver

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witness was sworn and examined:

- Mr Mark Parry, Director, Ron Finemore Transport (via Webex)

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Paul Ryan, Chair, Transport Education Audit Compliance Health Organisation
- Mr Simon Earle, Chief Executive Officer, Transport Education Audit Compliance Health Organisation
- Mr Andy Hughes, Senior Heavy Vehicle Driver Trainer, Sutton Road Training Centre
- Mr Peter Ross Hill, Chief Executive Officer, Sutton Road Training Centre

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Peter McAlpine, Chief Technology Officer, Netstar Australia
- Mr Michael Emanuel, Managing Director, Netstar Australia

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Ms Sally Webb, Acting Deputy Secretary, Safety Environment and Regulation, Transport for NSW
- Mr Scott Greenow, Acting Executive Director, Freight, Regional and Outer Metropolitan Division, Transport for NSW
- Mr Paul Salvati, National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR)

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 5.05pm. The public and the media withdrew.

3.6 Site visit – Friday 6 October 2023

The committee noted that it agreed, via emails dated 21 and 25 September 2023, to conduct a site visit to the following trucking companies in Western Sydney:

- Vellex Logistics, Wetherill Park
- Coastal Transport Services, Wetherill Park
- Linfox, Chullora.

Linfox were invited to host a site visit but have declined due to scheduling issues with having appropriate personnel on site to speak to the committee.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Kaine: That the committee adopt the itinerary for the site visit in Western Sydney on Friday 6 October 2023.

4. Inquiry into current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney

4.1 Public submissions

The committee noted the following submissions were published by the Committee Clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee: submissions nos: 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 11, 13, 16-48, 51-55, 58-62, and 64-65.

4.2 Partially confidential submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That the committee:

- keep the following information confidential, as per the request of the author: names in submissions no. 1, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 14-15, 49, 56, 57.
- authorise the publication of submissions no. 50 and 63 with the exception of sensitive or identifying material or potential adverse comments that have been highlighted by the secretariat.

5. Other business

Dr Kaine declared that a family member was a Transport Workers' Union member in another jurisdiction and she has previously worked with the Transport Education Audit Compliance Health Organisation (TEACHO) in a research capacity.

6. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 5.07pm until Friday 6 October 2023, 8.15am, Macquarie Street, Parliament House, Sydney (Inquiry into pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in New South Wales – site visit to Western Sydney).

Amanda Assoum
Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 10

Monday 4 December 2023

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Macquarie Room, Parliament House at 8.48 am

1. Members present

Ms Faehrmann, *Chair*

Mr D'Adam (via Webex)

Ms Merton (substituting for Mr Farraway)

Mr Nanva (via Webex) (from 8.48 am to 9 am), in-person from 1.40 pm

Dr Kaine (from 8.48 am to 2.15 pm) (from 4.04 pm)

Mrs Ward (via Webex)

2. Apologies

Mr Banasiak

3. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That draft minutes nos. 4, 5, 8 and 9 be confirmed.

4. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received

- 6 October 2023 – Correspondence from Mr Brian Turpie, Individual truck driver, to the secretariat providing additional information for the committee in lieu of his appearance at the hearing on 5 October 2023 for the inquiry into pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW.
- 24 October 2023 – Correspondence from Mr Peter Woodford, Engineering Director/CEO, LSM Technologies Pty Ltd, to the Chair providing information for the committee's consideration in relation to the inquiry into pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW.
- 2 November 2023 – Correspondence from Mr Rod Hannifey, President, National road Freighters Association Inc, to the secretariat providing additional information post-hearing for the committee's consideration in relation to the inquiry into pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW.
- 3 November 2023 – Correspondence from Mr Trevor Warner, Individual truck driver, to the secretariat providing additional information post-hearing for the committee's consideration in relation to the inquiry into pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW.
- 6 November 2023 – Correspondence from the Hon. Catherine King MP, Australian Minister for Transport Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government to the Chair responding to the written request, sent on 25 September 2023, for a copy of the final report of the expert panel commissioned by the Australian Government into Western Sydney's transport infrastructure needs for the inquiry into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney.
- 10 November 2023 – Letter from Ms Kate Boyd PSM, Deputy Secretary, General Counsel, The Cabinet Office to Clerk, enclosing documents requested by committee at the Budget Estimates hearing with Minister Graham on 9 November 2023.
- 21 November 2023 – Email from Mr Stephen Fenn, Head of Policy, Planning and Research Urban Taskforce Australia, to the committee declining invitation to give evidence at the hearing on 4 December for the inquiry into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney.
- 21 November 2023 – Email from Mr Glenn Moore, Ministerial and Government Liaison, VenuesNSW, to the committee declining invitation to give evidence at the hearing on 4 December 2023 for the inquiry into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney.
- 23 November 2023 – Email from Andrew Smithwick, Manager City Plan and Transformation, Canterbury Bankstown Council to the committee declining invitation to give evidence at the hearing on 4 December 2023 for the inquiry into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney.
- 27 November 2023 – Email from Opposition Whip to the secretariat, advising the Hon. Rachel Merton MLC will be substituting for the Hon. Sam Faraway MLC at the hearing on 4 December 2023 for the inquiry into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney.
- 4 December 2023 – Email from the Hon. Mark Banasiak MLC to the secretariat, advising that he will be apology at the hearing on 4 December 2023 for the inquiry into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney.
- 4 December 2023 – Email from Ms Naomi Wood, Acting Senior Executive Assistant, Blacktown City Council to the secretariat, advising that due to illness Mayor Anthony Bleasdale OAM, Blacktown City

Council is no longer able attend the hearing on 4 December for the inquiry into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney.

The committee noted that it agreed via email to publish the following correspondence:

- 11 October 2023 – Correspondence dated 6 October 2023 from Mr Brian Turpie, Individual truck driver, to the secretariat providing additional information for the committee in lieu of his appearance at the hearing on 5 October 2023 for the inquiry into pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW.
- 13 November 2023 – Correspondence dated 2 November 2023 from Mr Rod Hannifey, President, National Road Freighters Association Inc, to the secretariat providing additional information post-hearing for the committee's consideration in relation to the inquiry into pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW.
- 13 November 2023 – Correspondence dated 3 November 2023 from Mr Trevor Warner, Individual truck driver, to the secretariat providing additional information post-hearing for the committee's consideration in relation to the inquiry into pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in NSW.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee authorise the publication of correspondence from Ms Kate Boyd PSM, Deputy Secretary, General Counsel, The Cabinet Office regarding documents requested by committee at the Budget Estimates hearing with Minister Graham on 9 November 2023, dated 10 November 2023.

5. Inquiry into pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in New South Wales

5.1 Answers to questions on notice, supplementary questions and additional information

The following answers to questions on notice, supplementary questions and additional information was published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee:

- Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, Mr Steve Smith, Manager Intergovernmental Relations, National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR), received on 24 October 2023.
- Answers to questions on notice and additional information, Mr Daniel Peric, Research & Policy Official, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, received on 31 October 2023.
- Answers to supplementary questions, Mr Simon Earle, Chief Executive Officer, Transport Education Audit Compliance Health Organisation (TEACHO), received on 1 November 2023.
- Answers to questions on notice, Mr Mitch Dudley, Manager, Parliamentary Services, Office of the Secretary, Transport for NSW, received on 3 November 2023.

5.2 Transcript clarification

Resolved on the motion of Mrs Ward: That the committee authorise:

- the publication of correspondence from Mr Steve Smith, Manager Intergovernmental Relations, National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) clarifying the evidence of Mr Paul Salvati, Chief Operations Officer, National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR), at the hearing on 5 October 2023.
- the insertion of a footnote to page 59 of the transcript from 5 October 2023, as requested by Mr Steve Smith, Manager Intergovernmental Relations, National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR).

6. Inquiry into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney

6.1 Online questionnaire

The committee noted that, the secretariat, as authorised by the committee via email, published online a report of responses to the online questionnaire.

6.2 Hearing dates

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Merton: That the 5 February and 9 February dates, previously confirmed by the committee, both be hearings in Western Sydney.

6.3 Public hearing

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding the broadcasting of proceedings and other matters.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr David Harding, Executive Director, Policy and Advocacy, Business NSW
- Mr David Borger, Executive Director, Metropolitan NSW, Business Western Sydney.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Charles Casuscelli RFD, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) Ltd
- Dr George Greiss, Chair, Mayoral Forum, The Parks, Sydney Parklands Councils
- Mr Ben Taylor, Chair, General Managers Committee, The Parks, Sydney Parklands Councils.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witness was sworn and examined:

- Mr Steve Mann, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia NSW.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Mick Owens, General Manager, Greenfields Development Company No.2 Pty Ltd
- Mr Mark Peric, Director, Greenfields Development Company No.2 Pty Ltd.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr David Niven, Director City Delivery, Fairfield City Council
- Mr Andrew Mooney, Executive Strategic Planner, Fairfield City Council
- Ms Kate Stares, Strategic Partnerships Manager, Campbelltown City Council
- Mr Kerry Robinson, Chief Executive Officer, Blacktown City Council.

The following witness was examined on their former oath:

- Dr George Greiss, Mayor, Campbelltown City Council

Mr Kerry Robinson tendered the following document:

- Independent Panel Report entitled 'Western Sydney Transport Infrastructure Panel', commissioned by the Australian Government, dated April 2023.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Dr Joshua Bird, Director, Policy and Programs, Western Sydney Community Forum
- Mr Shrivankumar Guntuku, Manager, Policy and Programs, Western Sydney Community Forum
- Mr Adam Leto, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue
- Mr Luke Turner, Executive Director, Policy & Advocacy, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Roydon Ng, Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line
- Mr Steve Longhurst, Member, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA)
- Mr David Reynolds, Member, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA).

Mr Roydon Ng tendered the following documents:

- Bundle of documents relating to inquiry and T3 Sydenham to Bankstown metro conversion.

Mr Steve Longhurst tendered the following documents:

- The Conversation article entitled 'Which lines are priorities for Sydney Metro conversion? Hint: it's not Bankstown', dated 13 March 2019.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr John Brockhoff, National Policy Director, Planning Institute of Australia (PIA)
- Mr Tym Piegłowski, Planning Institute of Australia (PIA)
- Mr Colin Schroeder, Committee Member, EcoTransit Sydney
- Mr Matt Doherty, Committee Member, EcoTransit Sydney.

Mr Colin Schroeder tendered the following document:

- Additional information to the committee, EcoTransit.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Alex Claassens, Branch Secretary, Rail, Tram and Bus Union (NSW)
- Mr David Babineau, Tram and Bus Divisional Secretary, Rail, Tram and Bus Union (NSW)
- Mr Richard Olsen, NSW/QLD State Secretary, Transport Workers' Union of NSW
- Mr Daniel Peric, Research & Policy Official, Transport Workers' Union of NSW.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 5.02pm.

The public and the media withdrew.

6.4 Tendered documents

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Merton: That the committee accept and publish the following documents tendered during the public hearing:

- Independent Panel Report entitled 'Western Sydney Transport Infrastructure Panel', commissioned by the Australian Government, dated April 2023
- Bundle of documents relating to inquiry and T3 Sydenham to Bankstown metro conversion
- The Conversation article entitled 'Which lines are priorities for Sydney Metro conversion? Hint: it's not Bankstown', dated 13 March 2019
- Additional information to the committee, EcoTransit.

7. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 5.03 pm, *sine die*.

Lauren Evans

Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 11

Monday 5 February 2024

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Ian and Nancy Turbott Auditorium (Building EE), Parramatta South Campus, Western Sydney University, Rydalmere at 9.23 am

1. Members present

Ms Faehrmann, *Chair*

Mr D'Adam

Ms Merton (substituting for Mr Farraway)

2. Apologies

Mr Banasiak

Dr Kaine

Mr Nanva

Mrs Ward

3. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That draft minutes no. 10 be confirmed.

4. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received

- 19 December 2023 – Letter from Mr Mick Owens, General Manager, Development, Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd to the Chair, providing supplementary information regarding active transit in Oran Park
- 4 January 2024 – Document from Mr Roydon Ng, Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line to the committee, providing supplementary information regarding planning of rail services in the west of Bankstown
- 18 January 2024 – Email from Ms Lauren Nichols, Head of Policy & Analysis, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, declining the invitation on behalf of Campbelltown Health and Education Precinct members to give evidence at the hearing on 9 February 2024 for the inquiry into Current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney
- 18 January 2024 – Email from Ms Deyi Wu, Office of the Hon. Chris Rath MLC, Legislative Council Opposition Whip, advising that the Hon. Rachel Merton MLC will be substituting for the Hon. Sam Farraway MLC at the February hearings for the inquiry into current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney
- 22 January 2024 – Email from Mr Glenn Moore, Ministerial and Government Liaison, VenuesNSW, declining the invitation to give evidence at the hearing on 5 February 2024 for the inquiry for the inquiry into current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney
- 22 January 2024 – Email from Mr Stephen Fenn, Head of Policy - Planning and Research, Urban Taskforce, declining the invitation to give evidence at the hearing on 9 February 2024 for the inquiry for the inquiry into current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney
- 23 January 2024 – Email from Mr Nicholas Carlton, Manager – Forward Planning, The Hills Shire Council, declining the invitation to give evidence at the hearing on 5 February 2024 for the inquiry for the inquiry into current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney.
- 1 February 2024 – Email from Mr Simon Cowie, General Manager – NSW, The Heart Foundation, advising that due to COVID their representative is no longer able to attend the hearing on 5 February 2024 for the inquiry into current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney.

- 5 February 2024 – Email from Associate Professor Awais Piracha, Western Sydney University, advising that he is no longer able to attend the hearing on 5 February 2024 for the inquiry into current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee authorise the online publication of the following correspondence:

- 19 December 2023 – Letter from Mr Mick Owens, General Manager, Development, Greenfields Development Company No. 2 Pty Ltd to the Chair, providing supplementary information regarding active transit in Oran Park
- 4 January 2024 – Document from Mr Roydon Ng, Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line to the committee, providing supplementary information regarding planning of rail services in the west of Bankstown.

5. Inquiry into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney

5.1 Submission

The following submission was published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee: submission no. 70.

5.2 Answers to questions on notice

The following answers to questions on notice was published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee:

- answer to question on notice from Dr George Greiss, Mayor, Campbelltown City Council, received 13 December 2023
- answer to question on notice from Mr Roydon Ng, Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line, received 4 January 2024.

5.3 Election of Deputy Chair

The Chair called for nominations for Deputy Chair.

Mr D'Adam moved: That Ms Merton be elected as Deputy Chair of the committee in the absence of Mr Banasiak.

There being no further nominations, the Clerk declared Ms Merton elected Deputy Chair.

5.4 Sequence of questions

The committee noted that, unless the committee decides otherwise, the sequence of questions to be asked at hearings is to alternate between opposition, crossbench and government members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each.

5.5 Public hearing

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding the broadcasting of proceedings and other matters.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney
- Mr Thomas Nance, Policy and Strategy Lead, Centre for Western Sydney.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Sharath Mahendran, Creator, Building Beautifully
- Mrs Alison Dench, Resident of Western Sydney.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mayor Lisa Lake, Cumberland City Council
- Mr Daniel Cavallo, Acting General Manager, Cumberland City Council
- Mr Jeff Roorda, Director – Infrastructure & Project Delivery Services, Blue Mountains City Council
- Ms Gail Connelly, Chief Executive Officer, City of Parramatta.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Ms Anne Stuart, Director – Planning, Education and International Programme, Family Planning Australia
- Ms Caecilia Roth, Senior Policy Officer, Family Planning Australia.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Michael Timms, Co-Chair NSW Chapter, Australasian College of Road Safety
- Ms Emma Bacon, Executive Director, Sweltering Cities
- Ms Sanaa Shah, Western Sydney Community Campaigner, Sweltering Cities.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr John King, President, BusNSW
- Mr Matt Threlkeld, Executive Director, BusNSW.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 2.33 pm.

The public and the media withdrew.

6. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 2.34 pm until Friday 9 February 2024, 9.45 am, Performance Studio, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Campbelltown (public hearing).

Lauren Evans

Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 12

Friday 9 February 2024

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Performance Studio, Campbelltown Arts Centre, 9.47 am

1. Members present

Ms Faehrmann, *Chair*

Mr D'Adam

Ms Merton (substituting for Mr Farraway)

Mr Nanva (via videoconference) (until 10.56 am, from 11.58 am until 12.18 pm, then from 1.00 pm until 4.00 pm)

Dr Kaine (via videoconference) (until 12.45 pm, from 2.29 pm until 2.35 pm, then from 3.49 pm to 4.00 pm)

Mrs Ward (until 2.10 pm)

2. Apologies

Mr Banasiak

3. Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange

3.1 Terms of reference

The committee noted the following terms of reference referred by the House on 7 February 2024:

1. That Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts inquire into and report on the impact of the Rozelle Interchange, and in particular:

- (a) the planning, design and development of the Rozelle Interchange project and its impact on traffic flow, including the prioritisation of traffic from toll roads including WestConnex over local traffic
- (b) all traffic modelling that was undertaken, including for WestConnex, all surrounding arterial roads and all local roads
- (c) design decisions that restricted or compromised traffic flows, including any changes from the original plans or modelling
- (d) the planning, design and development of the Rozelle Interchange project and its impact on the efficient and on-time running of buses, ferries and all other public transport
- (e) the communication and consultation processes undertaken by Transport for NSW and other relevant stakeholders throughout the lifespan of the Rozelle Interchange Project
- (f) the social, environmental and economic impacts of the Rozelle Interchange project on impacted communities
- (g) the impact on foot traffic and active transport options, including due to the closure of Rozelle Parklands
- (h) the cause of asbestos detected in the Rozelle Parklands and the adequacy and appropriateness of the responses by government agencies and contractors to reports of asbestos in and near the Parklands
- (i) solutions to ease the congestion and gridlock that the opening of the Rozelle Interchange has created, including the impact of the Western Harbour Tunnel after opening
- (j) the adequacy of Transport for NSW planning, resource allocation and public communication in the period leading to and directly after the opening of the Rozelle Interchange
- (k) the cost of the Rozelle Interchange and the total cost of WestConnex
- (l) any other related matters.

2. That the committee report by 20 June 2024.

3.2 Closing date for submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the closing date for submissions be 10 March 2024.

3.3 Stakeholder list

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That:

- the secretariat circulate to members the Chair's proposed list of stakeholders to be invited to make a submission
- members have two days from when the Chair's proposed list is circulated to make amendments or nominate additional stakeholders

- the committee agree to the stakeholder list by email, unless a meeting of the committee is required to resolve any disagreement.

3.4 Approach to submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That, to enable significant efficiencies for members and the secretariat while maintaining the integrity of how submissions are treated, in the event that 50 or more individual submissions are received, the committee may adopt the following approach to processing short submissions:

- All submissions from individuals 250 words or less in length will:
 - be published with the author's name or as name suppressed, or kept confidential, according to the author's request
 - be reviewed by the secretariat for adverse mention and sensitive/identifying information, in accordance with practice
 - be channelled into one single document to be published on the inquiry website
- All other submissions will be processed and published as normal.

3.5 Online questionnaire

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That:

- the committee use an online questionnaire to capture individuals' views, and that the draft questions be circulated to the committee for comment, with a meeting on request from any committee member if there is disagreement on the questions
- the closing date for the online questionnaire be 10 March 2024
- the committee not accept proformas
- the media release announcing the establishment of the inquiry and emails to stakeholders note that there will be an online questionnaire to capture individuals' views
- the following wording, once approved by members, be included on the committee's website:
 - **Submissions**
Individuals are invited to submit their comments on the terms of reference [here](#) [hyperlink to online questionnaire]. This is a new way for individuals to participate in inquiries and it means we will no longer accept proformas. Individuals who want to make a more detailed submission (longer than 250 words) are still able to do so through our online submission portal or via email.
- the secretariat prepare a summary report of responses to the online questionnaire for publication on the website and use in the report, and that:
 - the committee agree to publication of the report via email, unless a member raises any concerns
 - individual responses be kept confidential on tabling.

4. Inquiry into current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney

4.1 Public hearing

Sequence of questions

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That the allocation of questions to be asked at the hearing be left in the hands of the Chair.

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding the broadcasting of proceedings and other matters.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Simon Hickey, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Airport
- Mr Scott MacKillop, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, Western Sydney Airport.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witness was sworn and examined:

- Ms Barbara Coorey, Councillor – Canterbury Bankstown Council, Private practice solicitor and community member of various community groups concerned about the South West Metro.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Ms Estelle Grech, Policy Manager – Planning, Committee for Sydney
- Ms Harri Bancroft, Policy Manager – Mobility, Committee for Sydney
- Ms Juile Walton, Convenor, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc.

Ms Walton tendered the following documents:

- 'How dense are we?' Another look at urban density and transport patterns in Australia, Canada and the USA', Mr Paul Mees, Proceedings of the State of Australian Cities National Conference, dated 25 November 2009.
- Report, 'Outer Urban Public Transport: Improving accessibility in lower-density areas, Infrastructure Australia', dated 26 October 2018.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Charles Wiafe, Principal Transport Planner, Liverpool City Council
- Mr Mahavir Arya, Transport Engineer, Liverpool City Council
- Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council
- Mayor Todd Carney, Penrith City Council
- Mayor Matt Gould, Wollondilly Shire Council

The following witness was examined on their former oath:

- Mr Ben Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Wollondilly Shire Council.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mrs Catherine Van Laeren, Executive Director – Metro West, Planning, Land Use Strategy & Housing, Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
- Ms Rebecca McPhee, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Customer Operations & Outcomes, Sydney Metro
- Ms Peta Gamon, Executive Director – Western Sydney Aerotropolis, Transport for NSW
- Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW
- Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director - Public Transport, Transport for NSW.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 3.49 pm.

The public and media withdrew.

Tendered documents

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee accept and publish the following documents tendered during the public hearing:

- "How dense are we?' Another look at urban density and transport patterns in Australia, Canada and the USA', Mr Paul Mees, Proceedings of the State of Australian Cities National Conference, dated 25 November 2009, tendered by Ms Julie Walton, Convenor, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc.
- Report, 'Outer Urban Public Transport: Improving accessibility in lower-density areas, Infrastructure Australia', dated 26 October 2018, tendered by Ms Julie Walton, Convenor, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc.

4.2 Extension of reporting date

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the reporting date be extended to 17 April 2024, with the secretariat to canvass members' availability for a deliberative in April 2024.

5. Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange

5.1 Hearing dates

Resolved, on the motion Ms Merton: That the committee hold 3 hearings and a reserve date in April and May 2024, the dates of which are to be determined by the Chair after consultation with members regarding their availability.

5.2 Site visits

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee conduct a site visit to the Rozelle Interchange in April 2024, the date of which is to be determined by the Chair after consultation with members regarding their availability.

6. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2023-2024

The committee considered Mr Faraway's email regarding the witness list for Budget Estimates 2023-2024 supplementary hearings for the portfolio of Regional Transport and Roads.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That Ms Anna Zycki, Transport for NSW no longer be included on the witness list.

Ms Merton moved: That the following additional witnesses be invited to give evidence:

- Mr Martin Donaldson – Executive Director, Transport for NSW
- Mr Peter McNalley – Executive Director, Transport for NSW.

Question put.

Ayes: Ms Merton.

Noes: Mr D'Adam, Ms Faehrmann, Dr Kaine, Mr Nanva.

Question resolved in the negative.

7. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 4.00 pm until 10.00 am, Monday 12 February 2024, Room 1254, Parliament House (report deliberative - Pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in New South Wales).

Lauren Evans
Committee Clerk

Draft minutes no. 18

Monday 22 April 2024

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Room 1043, Parliament House at 10.02 am

1. Members present

Ms Faehrmann, *Chair*
Mr D'Adam
Dr Kaine (via videoconference)
Mr Nanva
Mr Rath (substituting for Mr Farraway) (from 10.34 am)
Mrs Ward (via videoconference)

2. Apologies

Mr Banasiak

3. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That draft minutes no. 11 be confirmed.

4. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received

- Email – from Ms Ewelina Ellsmore, Office of the Hon. Mark Banasiak MLC advising Mr Banasiak will be an apology for the report deliberative on Monday 22 April 2024 for the inquiry into current and future public transport needs of Western Sydney
- Email – from Ms Deyi Wu, Office of the Hon. Chris Rath MLC, Opposition Whip advising Mr Rath will be substituting for Mr Farraway for the report deliberative on Monday 22 April 2024 for the inquiry into current and future public transport needs of Western Sydney.

5. Inquiry into current and future public transport needs of Western Sydney**5.1 Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions**

The committee noted that the following answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions were published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee:

- answer to supplementary question from Professor David Levinson, University of Sydney, received 15 February 2024
- answer to questions on notice from Ms Barbara Coorey, Councillor – Canterbury Bankstown Council, Private practice solicitor and community member of various community groups concerned about the South West Metro, received 16 February 2024
- answer to supplementary question, Mrs Alison Dench, resident of Western Sydney, received 27 February 2024
- answers to supplementary questions, Cumberland City Council, received 1 March 2024
- answer to supplementary question, Australasian College of Road Safety, received 6 March 2024
- answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, BusNSW, received 7 March 2024
- answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, received 11 March 2024
- answers to questions on notice, Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, received 12 March 2024
- answers to questions on notice, Sweltering Cities, received 12 March 2024
- answer to supplementary question, Centre for Western Sydney, received 14 March 2024
- answers to supplementary questions, City of Parramatta, received 18 March 2024.

5.2 Transcript clarification

The committee considered the request from Ms Maja Maja Georgievska, External Affairs and Communication Manager, Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport to clarify evidence of Mr Simon Hickey, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport at the hearing on 9 February 2024.

Resolved, on the motion of D'Adam: That the committee authorise:

- publication of correspondence from Ms Maja Maja Georgievska, External Affairs and Communication Manager, Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport clarifying the evidence of Mr Simon Hickey, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport, at the hearing on 9 February 2024
- insertion of a footnote at page 3 of the transcript of 9 February 2024, as requested by Ms Maja Georgievska, External Affairs and Communication Manager, Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport.

5.3 Consideration of chair's draft report

The Chair submitted her draft report entitled *Current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney* which, having been previously circulated, was taken as having been read.

Chapter 1

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That paragraph 1.12 be amended by omitting 'Western Sydney is more socio-economically disadvantaged than other areas of Greater Sydney, with more than 60 per cent of the population in the lower half of the socio-economic index. Conversely, only eight per cent of the Eastern Harbour City population is in this cohort' and inserting instead 'Western Sydney has a higher proportion of residents with a lower socio-economic profile'.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That paragraph 1.31 be amended omitting 'As a result, there is a noticeable disparity and' and inserting instead 'The report of the Independent Western Sydney Transport Infrastructure Panel noted an'.

Chapter 2

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That paragraph 2.89 be amended by omitting 'This is particularly the case to new growth areas in Southwest Sydney, leaving many people without adequate access to jobs and essential services and entrenching socio-economic disadvantage experienced in some areas' and inserting instead 'This is particularly the case to new growth areas in Southwest Sydney, leaving many people without adequate access to jobs and essential services and entrenching socio-economic barriers experienced in some areas.'

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That Finding 1 be amended by omitting 'This is particularly the case to new growth areas in Southwest Sydney, leaving many people without adequate access to jobs and essential services and entrenching socio-economic disadvantage experienced in some areas' and inserting instead 'This is particularly the case to new growth areas in Southwest Sydney, leaving many people without adequate access to jobs and essential services and entrenching socio-economic barriers experienced in some areas.'

Chapter 3

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That paragraph 3.63 be amended by inserting 'in locations that present further housing and economic revitalisation opportunities' after 'That the Government commit to and deliver on two further stations west of Sydney Olympic Park on the Metro West line.'

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That Recommendation 3 be amended by 'in locations that present further housing and economic revitalisation opportunities' after 'That the Government commit to and deliver on two further stations west of Sydney Olympic Park on the Metro West line.'

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That paragraph 3.64 be amended by omitting 'urgently prioritise the complete planning and development of additional stations on the confirmed sections of the Metro Western Airport line by the time of the Airport's opening in 2026' and inserting instead 'immediately assess the feasibility of additional stations on the confirmed section of the Metro Western Sydney Airport line so that any planning and development commence by the time of the Airport's opening in 2026.'

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That Recommendation 4 be amended by omitting 'urgently prioritise the complete planning and development of additional stations on the confirmed sections of the Metro Western Airport line by the time of the Airport's opening in 2026' and inserting instead 'immediately assess the feasibility of additional stations on the confirmed section of the Metro Western Sydney Airport line so that any planning and development commence by the time of the Airport's opening in 2026.'

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That the following new paragraph be inserted after paragraph 3.69:

'The committee also notes concerns that the newly settled Oran Park should not have been allowed to develop without the provision of a rail link. In particular, the committee is concerned at evidence that access to jobs and road congestion are serious problems in this locality, concerns that are increased by the fact that it is unclear how long any Metro Western Sydney Airport connection from the Aerotropolis to Macarthur passing through Oran Park will take to be delivered.'

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That paragraph 3.70 be amended by inserting 'via Oran Park' after 'Leppington to Western Sydney Airport'.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That Recommendation 5 be amended by inserting 'via Oran Park' after 'Leppington to Western Sydney Airport'.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That paragraph 3.71 be omitted:

'Further to the above, the committee also notes concerns that the newly settled Oran Park should not have been allowed to develop without the provision of a rail link. In particular, the committee is concerned at evidence that access to jobs and road congestion are serious problems in this locality, concerns that are increased by the fact that it is unclear how long any Metro Western Sydney Airport connection from the Aerotropolis to Macarthur passing through Oran Park will take to be delivered. In the circumstances, the committee recommends that the Government should investigate extending the Leppington heavy rail line to Oran Park. This may be more cost-effective and a faster option than waiting for a metro extension'.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That Recommendation 6 be omitted:

'Recommendation 6

That the Government investigate extending the T2 heavy rail line from Leppington to Oran Park'.

Mr D'Adam left the meeting.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That paragraph 3.73 be amended by omitting 'extend stage 2' and inserting instead 'urgently investigate extending stage 2'.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That Recommendation 7 be amended by omitting 'extend stage 2' and inserting instead 'urgently investigate extending stage 2'.

Mr D'Adam rejoined the meeting.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That paragraph 3.171 be amended by omitting 'with a view to completion by 2030'.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That Recommendation 11 be amended by omitting 'with a view to completion by 2030'.

Chapter 4

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That paragraph 4.108 be amended by omitting 'for Western Sydney, alongside relevant public transport infrastructure planning and decisions, and inserting instead 'within integrated land use and transport planning considerations for Western Sydney,'.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That Recommendation 16 be amended by omitting 'for Western Sydney, along relevant public transport infrastructure planning and decisions, and inserting instead 'within integrated land use and transport planning considerations for Western Sydney,'.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That paragraph 4.110 be amended by omitting 'That the Government not approve any more housing development in Sydney's outer fringes until public transport needs of existing and approved but not built areas, are fully addressed' and inserting instead 'That the Government prioritise the immediate public transport needs of existing and approved, but not yet built, areas of Western Sydney's outer fringes prior to approving more housing development in those precincts.'

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That Recommendation 16 be amended by omitting 'That the Government not approve any more housing development in Sydney's outer fringes until public transport needs of existing and approved but not built areas, are fully addressed' and inserting instead 'That the Government prioritise the immediate public transport needs of existing and approved, but not yet built, areas of Western Sydney's outer fringes prior to approving more housing development in those precincts.'

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That paragraph 4.144 be amended by omitting 'That the government take into consideration emerging transport technologies, such as automated vehicles, in design and planning of public transport infrastructure' and inserting instead 'That the Government take into consideration emerging transport technologies – such as automated vehicles – as well as any associated workforce planning, safety considerations and community attitudes in the design and planning of public transport infrastructure.'

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That Recommendation 21 be amended by omitting 'That the government take into consideration emerging transport technologies, such as automated vehicles, in design and planning of public transport infrastructure' and inserting instead 'That the Government take into consideration emerging transport technologies – such as automated vehicles – as well as any associated workforce planning, safety considerations and community attitudes in the design and planning of public transport infrastructure.'

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That:

- The draft report, as amended, be the report of the committee and that the committee present the report to the House;
- The transcripts of evidence, submissions, tabled documents, answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, summary report of the online questionnaire and correspondence relating to the inquiry be tabled in the House with the report;
- Upon tabling, all unpublished attachments to submissions and individual responses to the online questionnaire be kept confidential by the committee;
- Upon tabling, all unpublished transcripts of evidence, submissions, tabled documents, answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, summary report of the online questionnaire and correspondence relating to the inquiry, be published by the committee, except for those documents kept confidential by resolution of the committee;
- The committee secretariat correct any typographical, grammatical and formatting errors prior to tabling;
- The committee secretariat be authorised to update any committee comments where necessary to reflect changes to recommendations or new recommendations resolved by the committee;
- Dissenting statements be provided to the secretariat within 24 hours after receipt of the draft minutes of the meeting;
- The secretariat is tabling the report at 1 pm, Monday 29 April 2024.

- The Chair to advise the secretariat and members if they intend to hold a press conference, and if so, the date and time.

6. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 10.44 am until Tuesday 23 April 2024, Parliament House (public hearing – Impact of the Rozelle Interchange).

Alex Stedman
Committee Clerk

