

General Purpose Standing Committee No.4

The transport needs of Sydney's North-West sector

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Terms of reference

That GPSC4 inquire into and report on the integrated transport needs of Sydney's North-West Sector and, in particular:

1. The requirements and plans for an integrated transport system in the North-West Sector, including road, rail and bus links,
2. The proposed funding of an integrated transport system for the North-West Sector, including the distribution of developer and State infrastructure levies,
3. The plans and funding for the North-West Metro and the NSW Government's decision not to proceed with the North-West Rail Link, and
4. Any other related matters.

These terms of reference were self-referred by the Committee on 29 August 2008.

Committee membership

The Hon Jenny Gardiner MLC	The Nationals	<i>Chair</i>
The Hon Lynda Voltz MLC	Australian Labor Party	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
The Hon David Clarke MLC	Liberal Party	
The Hon Kayee Griffin MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Ms Lee Rhiannon*	The Greens	
The Hon Roy Smith MLC	Shooters Party	
The Hon Henry Tsang MLC	Australian Labor Party	

* Ms Lee Rhiannon substituted for Ms Sylvia Hale for the duration of this Inquiry.

Table of contents

	Chair's foreword	ix
	Summary of recommendations	xi
Chapter 1	Conduct of the Inquiry	1
	Terms of reference	1
	Submissions	1
	Public hearings	1
	Structure of the report	2
Chapter 2	Transport needs	3
	Definition of the North West Sector	3
	Transport needs of the Sector	5
	Improved public transport	5
	Transport movements and patterns	6
	Is rail the solution?	9
	Road solutions and upgrades	9
	The "car lover" tag	10
	M2 bus services	11
	Adverse impacts of lack of public transport	12
	Congestion	12
	Economic impacts	13
	Environmental impacts	14
	Social impacts	15
	Equity impacts	16
	Promised transport infrastructure for the Sector	16
	Action for Transport 2010 (November 1998)	16
	Transport Strategy for Sydney (December 2005)	17
	Urban Transport Statement (November 2006)	19
	SydneyLink: The future of Sydney's transport (March 2008)	20
	Public response to broken promises	21
Chapter 3	Rail infrastructure in the North West	22
	Heavy rail or metro?	22
	Pros and cons of heavy rail and metro	22
	Decision not to proceed with the North West heavy rail link	24
	Requirement for second heavy rail crossing of the Harbour	26

	Government preference for metro as future of rail infrastructure	28
	Indefinite deferral of the North West Metro	29
	Decisions not to proceed with other heavy rail projects	30
	Duplication of Richmond heavy rail line	30
	Extension of north west rail link to connect with the Richmond Line	32
	Parramatta to Epping heavy rail line	32
	Continued planning for a north west rail link	33
	Infrastructure Australia – an opportunity missed?	35
	Perception of bias in provision of infrastructure	38
	The impact of deferred transport infrastructure on metropolitan planning	39
	Impact on growth	44
	Wasted expenditure	45
	State Government expenditure	46
	Local government expenditure	46
Chapter 4	The road ahead for the North West	48
	Impact of the Mini-Budget	48
	Transport infrastructure lost	48
	Retained or new transport infrastructure	48
	Maximising the benefit of bus services in the North West	50
	Issues associated with the provision of new buses	51
	New bus service contracts for the North West	53
	Proposal for a bus network for North West Sector	55
	Raising revenue for more public transport via road demand initiatives	56
	Time of day tolling	57
	Car parking space levy increases	58
	Toll cashback schemes	59
	Other funding options for rail infrastructure	59
	Public private partnerships	60
	Proposal to fund the North West Metro	61
	Material adverse event clauses	62
	Tax increment financing	63
	Growth Centres Commission	64
	Integrated transport planning and implementation	67
	Focus on roads and neglect of rail	67
	Transport integration in NSW and other States	69
	An integrated transport planning authority	70
	A new long-term integrated transport strategic plan	74
	Transport needs analysis of North West Sector	77

	Peak oil	79
Appendix 1	Submissions	81
Appendix 2	Witnesses	87
Appendix 3	North West Metro Line proposed route	89
Appendix 4	CityRail network map	90
Appendix 5	Road proposals from Inquiry participants	91
Appendix 6	Minutes	99

Chair's foreword

For the past decade the fact that the North West sector has suffered significantly from a lack of public transport infrastructure has been well acknowledged and documented. However, in that time virtually nothing has been done to address this need. Over the last ten years the residents of the North West sector have had to suffer through a cycle of new and then broken promises on the delivery of major transport infrastructure, most notably rail.

Even during the relatively short life of this Inquiry, the residents of the North West had to endure yet another major backdown by the Government on promised transport infrastructure – the indefinite deferral of the North West Metro, the deferral of the Schofields to Vineyard rail duplication, and the cancellation of the Carlingford Line passing loop.

The Committee heard from many citizens from the North West who related their frustration at being mired in ever-increasingly congested traffic, with no viable public transport alternative to which they can turn. They spoke of resulting negative effects on their business, social and family lives. The Committee also heard of people who had made life choices and investment decisions based on the belief that promised infrastructure would be built. That belief, or faith, that the NSW Government is committed to and capable of delivering on its transport promises has now disappeared.

The people of the North West believe they have been discriminated against and have received an inequitable share of the transport infrastructure that has been delivered by the Government. This has forced them into a reliance on cars, yet they must pay ever-increasing tolls, while residents in other parts of Sydney are subsidised for some of those costs.

For the North West sector to survive and grow it must be provided with an adequate and integrated road and public transport system, the backbone of which is a rail link. Everyone, including the NSW Government, agrees this need is dire. However, the NSW Government has said that it cannot afford to do what most obviously needs to be done.

The NSW Government has promised additional buses to the North West sector in lieu of a permanent remedy to its transport woes. The Committee makes a number of recommendations with a view to maximising the benefit that can be derived from what the Government says it can afford for the North West.

Based on the evidence it received, the Committee is compelled to recommend that the NSW Government commit to the funding of a new rail link in the North West. The Committee has made this recommendation notwithstanding the emphatic statements from the Government that it is incapable of funding such a project. The Committee viewed the NSW Government's failure to make a submission to Infrastructure Australia for funding of a rail link in the North West as an opportunity lost.

The Committee has recommended that the NSW Government prepare a submission for a rail link in the North West for inclusion of the National Infrastructure Priority List. If such a submission fails to attract Federal funding, the NSW Government must re-prioritise its funding plans and provide rail infrastructure to the North West.

The strategic transport planning for the North West sector and the Sydney region needs overhauling. Future infrastructure for bus, rail and road needs to be planned for in an integrated manner that envisages and accommodates the need to move from one mode to another within transport corridors as needs and demand changes. To this end the Committee has recommended that an Integrated Transport Planning Authority be established.

The Committee has also recommended that a panel of transport experts be established to develop a draft long-term integrated transport strategic plan for the Sydney region, to be used by this new Authority. As a first step this panel should develop an integrated transport plan for the North West, which could then be used as a blueprint for wider implementation across the Sydney Region.

I would like to thank my Committee colleagues for their work on this Inquiry, and the staff of the Committee Secretariat for their support throughout.

Finally, I would also like to thank the many people who participated in the Inquiry, particularly the vast number of citizens from the North West sector who made submissions to the Inquiry. Their valuable input was most appreciated by the members of the Committee.



Hon Jenny Gardiner MLC

Committee Chair

Summary of recommendations

- Recommendation 1** **35**
 That the NSW Government, as a priority, continue planning and undertaking land acquisition for a north west rail link from Epping to Rouse Hill and that this include an extension of the route from Rouse Hill to a point on the Richmond rail line.
- That the NSW Government prepare a submission for inclusion of this project on the National Infrastructure Priority List, and, if the project fails to attract federal funding, the NSW Government fund the north west rail link.
- Recommendation 2** **39**
 That the NSW Government issue a statement setting out the merits of the CBD Metro, West Metro and the North West Metro.
- Recommendation 3** **44**
 That during the review of the metropolitan subregional strategies, scheduled to be completed in March 2009, the Department of Planning in consultation with local councils revise the employment and population targets for councils in the North West Sector, taking into account that some major transport infrastructure projects have been deferred indefinitely, and formally amend these targets to reflect sustainable capacity in individual LEPs and in the Metropolitan Strategy.
- Recommendation 4** **53**
 That the initiatives being undertaken by government transport agencies to improve bus travel times in the North West be progressed and implemented as a matter of urgency.
- Recommendation 5** **55**
 That the Ministry of Transport significantly increase the number of kilometres allocated within the metropolitan bus service contracts so as to provide for greater off-peak and intra-regional services.
- Recommendation 6** **56**
 That the Ministry of Transport expand bus services in the North West by constructing a dedicated bus lane on the five kilometres of road between the M2 and the T-Way.
- That the Ministry of Transport provide the majority of residents within the North West region with light rail or bus services on a regular basis and within easy walking distance of their residences.
- Recommendation 7** **63**
 That the NSW Government when negotiating contracts with the private sector for the development of road infrastructure ensure that the terms of agreement do not act as a barrier to the building of public transport infrastructure in the future.
- Recommendation 8** **73**
 That the NSW Government establish an Integrated Transport Planning Authority with the responsibility for network wide integrated transport planning and for the prioritisation and direction of all transport infrastructure expenditure.

Recommendation 9**77**

That the NSW Government establish a panel of transport experts to develop a draft long-term integrated transport strategic plan for the Sydney region, for the Integrated Transport Planning Authority that the Committee has recommended be established. As a first step, the NSW Government establish an independent body, the North West Region Transport Board, to develop an integrated, sustainable transport plan for the North West Sector, that could act as a model for other regions of New South Wales.

Chapter 1 Conduct of the Inquiry

This chapter provides an overview of the manner in which the Inquiry was conducted and the structure of the report.

Terms of reference

- 1.1 The Inquiry terms of reference were adopted on 29 August 2008, under the Committee's power to make a self-reference, and are reproduced on page iv of this report. The terms of reference require the Committee to examine the integrated transport needs of Sydney's North West Sector, including road, rail and bus links, the distribution of developer and State infrastructure levies and the plans and funding of the North West Metro.

Submissions

- 1.2 The Committee called for submissions through advertisements in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Northern District Times* and the *North Side Courier*. The Committee also wrote to key stakeholders and interested parties, inviting them to make submissions.
- 1.3 The Committee received a total of 196 submissions, including 11 supplementary submissions. They were received from a range of stakeholders, including:
- two from the NSW Government
 - 151 from concerned citizens
 - 19 from businesses
 - 10 from local governments and their regional organisations of councils
 - nine from community groups
 - three from local members
 - two from academics.
- 1.4 A list of submissions is contained in Appendix 1. The submissions may be accessed via the Committee's website at www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/gpsc4.

Public hearings

- 1.5 The Committee held three public hearings during the Inquiry and heard from a range of stakeholders. All hearings were held at Parliament House. A list of witnesses who appeared is provided in Appendix 2 and transcripts of the public hearings can be found on the Committee's website www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/gpsc4.
- 1.6 The Department of Premier and Cabinet initially declined the Committee's invitation to appear at a public hearing on 7 November 2008, due to the imminent release of the Mini-

Budget on 11 November 2008 and structural changes in the Department.¹ Prior to the hearing, the NSW Ministry of Transport provided a supplementary NSW Government submission outlining changes to transport investment that have arisen from the Mini-Budget.²

- 1.7** The Department of Premier and Cabinet appeared at a subsequent hearing on 19 November 2008, with representatives from the NSW Ministry of Transport, NSW Department of Planning, NSW Treasury, Roads and Traffic Authority and Growth Centres Commission.
- 1.8** The Committee would like to thank all those persons who participated in the Inquiry, whether by making a submission, giving evidence or attending the public hearings.

Structure of the report

- 1.9** Chapter 2 describes Sydney's North West Sector and discusses the impact of the lack of transport options for local residents. The chapter also lists key transport commitments made by the Government in policy documents released since 1998.
- 1.10** Chapter 3 examines recent government decisions to not proceed with the North West Rail Link and the indefinite deferral of the North West Metro. It also examines the impact of the continuing non-delivery of major rail infrastructure on metropolitan planning for the North West Sector.
- 1.11** Chapter 4 outlines the transport infrastructure that did and did not survive the 2008-2009 Mini-Budget. It also examines what can best be done for the North West in the short-term and how an integrated transport system in the future may be planned and delivered.

¹ Correspondence from Mr Peter Duncan, Deputy Director General, Department of Premier and Cabinet, to Chair, 6 November 2008

² Supplementary Submission 149a, NSW Government – Ministry of Transport

Chapter 2 Transport needs

This chapter describes Sydney's "North West Sector". The transport needs of the area and the impact of the lack of transport options is also discussed, including the "car lover" tag that has been applied to the region's residents. In addition, the chapter lists the key transport commitments made by the Government in policy documents released since 1998.

Definition of the North West Sector

- 2.1 For planning purposes, the NSW Government has defined the north west in terms of specific local government areas. However, the transport needs of the Sector also impact on neighbouring areas as residents and commuters from the north west travel to and from and also through these areas.
- 2.2 The *Metropolitan Strategy: City of Cities – A Plan for Sydney's Future (Metropolitan Strategy)* is the Government's plan to facilitate and manage Sydney's growth over the next 25 years.³ The *Metropolitan Strategy* divided Sydney into 10 subregions and set housing and employment capacity targets for each subregion.⁴ One of these subregions is the north west, which is made up of the local government areas of Baulkham Hills, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury and Penrith. Covering 5,240km² the north west is the largest of the subregions and supports a population of over 760,000 people.⁵

Figure 2.1 Map of the north west subregion and surrounding Sydney subregions

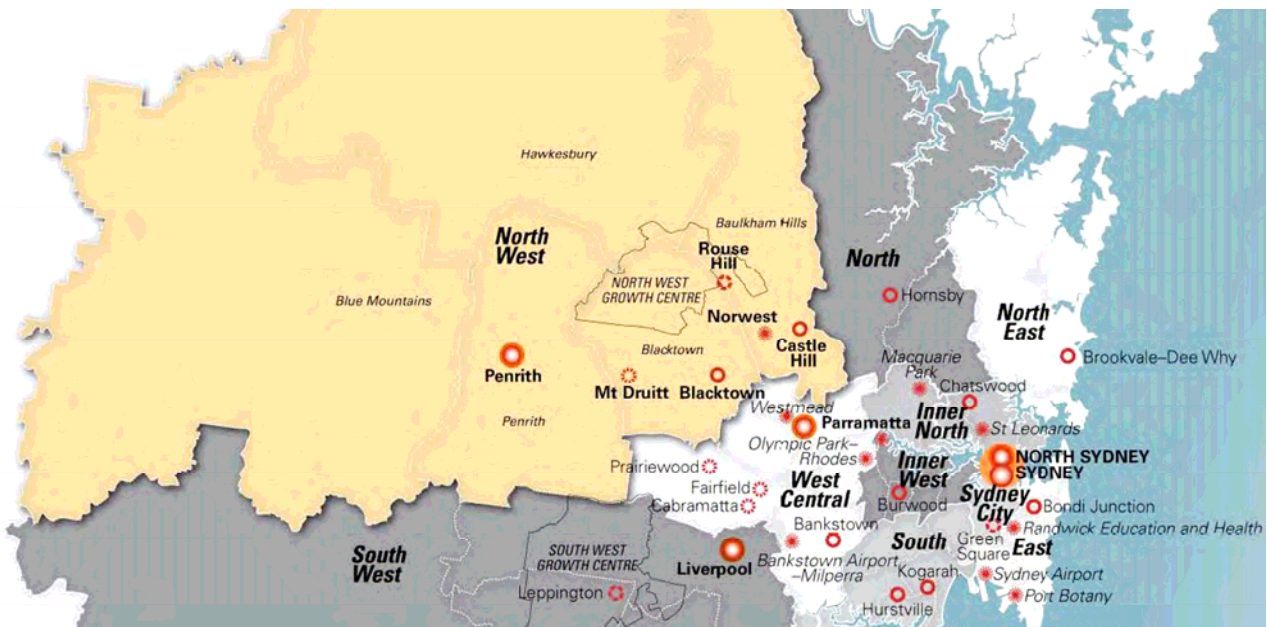


Figure source: *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, p 6

- ³ NSW Government, *Metropolitan Strategy: City of Cities – A Plan for Sydney's Future*, 2005, p 3
- ⁴ Submission 149, NSW Government - Department of Premier and Cabinet, p 2
- ⁵ NSW Government, *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, 2007, p 6

- 2.3** The north west has experienced above average growth over recent years. This growth is forecast to continue as the subregion has been identified in the *Metropolitan Strategy* as a centre for population and economic growth. The subregion also includes the “North West Growth Centre” which will be the focus of new land release over the next 25 years,⁶ supported by local and regional infrastructure and significant land for employment.⁷
- 2.4** The *Metropolitan Strategy* set a housing target for the north west subregion of 140,000 new dwellings by 2031, an increase of 56 per cent from the 251,000 dwellings in 2004. A similarly sized increase in the number of jobs for the region was set in the 2007 *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, with 130,000 new jobs targeted by 2031, a 55 per cent increase from 237,000 jobs in 2001.⁸
- 2.5** The north west subregion is known for its industrial and business parks that house a variety of businesses, including the headquarters of Australia’s largest supermarket chain, Woolworths. These business parks include the Western Sydney Employment Hub, the Norwest Business Park and the nearby Macquarie Park. The NSW Government submission notes that further employment land in the subregion is also being investigated.⁹
- 2.6** The following witnesses informed the Committee of the contribution of the North West to the economy. The Mayor of Baulkham Hills Shire Council, Councillor Larry Bolitho, noted that his Shire currently provides 51,000 jobs and a \$13 billion contribution to the economy.¹⁰ Similarly Mr Anthony Moran, President of the Sydney Hills Business Chamber stated that:
- [T]here is no questioning the fact that Sydney Hills is one of the fastest growing regions in New South Wales, providing exceptional employment and economic development opportunities for residents in the area as well as for residents in greater Sydney and New South Wales, not to mention the significant contribution this represents to the State's economy.¹¹
- 2.7** The Committee received submissions from the neighbouring local government areas of Parramatta, Hornsby, North Sydney and Ryde,¹² which demonstrated that the transport needs of the north west subregion impact considerably on the subregion’s neighbouring areas. These transport needs are discussed in greater detail below.
- 2.8** The North West Sector includes the local government areas of the following *Metropolitan Strategy* subregions:
- North: Hornsby had a population of 157,400 in 2006

⁶ *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, p 6

⁷ Submission 149, p 4

⁸ Submission 149, p 3

⁹ Submission 149, p 4

¹⁰ Clr Alfred Bolitho, Mayor, Baulkham Hill Shire Council, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 7

¹¹ Mr Anthony Moran, President, Sydney Hills Business Chamber, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 32

¹² Submission 13, Parramatta City Council; Submission 132, Hornsby Shire Council; Submission 152, North Sydney Council, and Submission 182, City of Ryde

- Inner North: Ryde had a population of 99,800 in 2004
- West Central: Parramatta had a population of 151,000 in 2004
- North West had a total population of 768,000 in 2006, consisting of:
 - Baulkham Hills: 170,000
 - Blacktown: 280,000
 - Blue Mountains: 76,000
 - Hawkesbury: 62,000
 - Penrith: 180,000.¹³

2.9 Therefore for the purposes of the Inquiry, the Committee will define the “North West Sector” more broadly than the north west subregion as defined in the *Metropolitan Strategy* to include the neighbouring local government areas in the greater north west area of Sydney. The Committee also takes into account those suburbs in Sydney’s broader North West that are not serviced by rail, such as Castle Hill.

Transport needs of the Sector

2.10 The Committee was told that the North West needs better transport, particularly improved public transport, matched to the region’s growth. The Committee was also told that the North West needs transport that services travel within the region and to neighbouring centres such as Parramatta as well as to Sydney’s Central Business District (CBD).

Improved public transport

2.11 A local resident advised the Committee that although the North West is one of the fastest growing areas in New South Wales, this growth has not been matched by transport infrastructure:

Twenty years ago, much of Sydney’s north-west was rolling hills dedicated mainly to rural activities. . . . Since that time, Sydney’s north-west has been recognised “as one of the fastest growing regions in New South Wales.” As a general rule it would be fair to say the transport infrastructure has belatedly followed the development and growth, rather than preceding it.

While there have been some improvements, the region continues to play “catch-up” and remains poorly supported in terms of transport infrastructure and expectations enjoyed by much of Sydney.¹⁴

¹³ NSW Government, *North Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, 2007, p 7; NSW Government, *Inner North Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, 2007 p 7; NSW Government, *West Central Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, 2007, p 6; NSW Government, *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, 2007, pp 6-7

¹⁴ Submission 173, Mr Chris Cunliffe-Jones, pp 1-2

- 2.12** The need for improved public transport in the North West has also been identified by the NSW Government, at least since 1998, when it released *Action for Transport 2010: an Integrated Transport Plan for Sydney*. Dr Philip Laird quoted from this document in his evidence to the Committee:

Sydney's north west is the only growth corridor throughout the metropolitan region without a heavy rail link. Despite significant development in recent decades the provision of adequate public transport has been neglected. The result is a high dependency on cars. Failure to address this lack of public transport would mean reduced access to employment and educational opportunities for residents and severe traffic congestion.¹⁵

- 2.13** A more recent NSW Government transport planning document, the 2007 *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy* indicates that the need for improved public transport still exists as the subregion has the lowest proportion of public transport trips of any subregion. These statistics refer specifically to the north west subregion but illustrate the transport movements within the north west sector more generally:

On an average weekday, 79 per cent of trips by North West residents are made by vehicle, just over 7 per cent by public transport and 13 per cent by walking or cycling. The subregion has the lowest proportion of trips by public transport of any subregion.¹⁶

- 2.14** The need for improved public transport was also identified in submissions from local residents. For example, Ms Julie Kersake submitted that '[o]ur choice for public transport in the Hills ranges from not that good to none at all.'¹⁷ Mr James Fields also stated that the 'current public transport system to the North-West is a disgrace at best.'¹⁸ Another example was Mr Bob Kershaw who wrote that:

There are too few bus services, no local train services, insufficient parking at stations on the northern line and the tolls for drivers are extortionate. The inadequacy of public transport services forces many people to drive...¹⁹

Transport movements and patterns

- 2.15** In order to understand the current transport needs of the North West, the Committee requested the Director General of the Ministry of Transport to provide statistics of transport movements for the North West. In reply, Mr Glasson advised there are just over 1 million transport movements in the subregion each weekday. He explained that of these:

- 70 per cent are for travel within the North West sector

¹⁵ Dr Philip Laird, School of Mathematics and Applied Statistics, University of Wollongong, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 1 (Dr Laird appeared before the Committee as a private citizen); NSW Government, *Action for Transport 2010: an Integrated Transport Plan for Sydney*, 1998, p 20

¹⁶ *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, p 92

¹⁷ Supplementary Submission 33a, Ms Julie Kersake, p 1

¹⁸ Submission 112, Mr James Fields, p 1

¹⁹ Submission 55, Mr Bob Kershaw, p 1

- 30,000 (or 3 per cent) trips from the North West are to the Sydney CBD
- almost 70,000 trips are to Parramatta
- 45,000 trips are to Blacktown
- 30,000 trips are destined for each of Ryde and Ku-ring-gai.²⁰

2.16 Mr Glasson provided further details on commuter trips to work, stating that 160,000 trips originate in the subregion, and of these:

- 54,000 are within the North West
- 20,000 are to the Sydney CBD
- 13,000 are to Parramatta
- 8,000 are to Blacktown.²¹

2.17 Mr Kenneth Dobinson, Director of 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney, explained to the Committee that the primary travel movements of the region, are within the Sector, rather than to the CBD:

[T]he primary movement in the north-west sector is inside the sector. That is where most of the movements are. You need to be thinking about what you are going to do to improve that as the highest priority. The second demand for people who move outside the northwest sector is to Parramatta. The third is to Macquarie Park and in the future the fourth will be to the north west.

Where does the CBD come into this? We all talk about building a damn railway line from the north-west sector to the CBD, but why? Only 3 per cent of the people make those sorts of journeys. I would rather think of the other 97 per cent plus that 3 per cent. That is fact, not fiction. That is the first thing I would like to get across.²²

2.18 This was reiterated by Mr Chris Stapleton of Stapleton Transportation and Planning Pty Ltd, who advised the Committee that ‘four times more people go from the Baulkham Hills area to Parramatta than go to the city. And they go right through the day. It is where they go to shop, and for all sorts of personal reasons’.²³

2.19 In addition, evidence provided by the neighboring local government areas of North Sydney, and Ryde showed clearly that the transport needs of the North West can not be considered in isolation from neighboring areas. For example, the Mayor of the North Sydney Council, Clr

²⁰ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence, 19 November 2008, Mr Peter Duncan, Acting Deputy Director General, Department of Premier and Cabinet, p 9

²¹ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence, 19 November 2008, Mr Duncan, p 9, the Committee notes that in the advice provided by the Ministry of Transport 69,000 commuter trips do not fall within the primary categories

²² Mr Kenneth Dobinson, Director, 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 36

²³ Mr Chris Stapleton, Stapleton Transportation and Planning Pty Ltd, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 22

Geina McCaffery gave the Committee an insight into how the transport movements of the North West impact on neighboring areas. Clr McCaffery said:

North Sydney has a residential population of 62,000 people. It is also a major employment centre with a working population of 51,000. A significant proportion of those people who work in North Sydney come from the north-west region.²⁴

2.20 Similarly Mr Sam Cappelli, Manager, Environment, of the City of Ryde explained that:

The location of the City of Ryde has direct relationship with the transport needs of the north-west sector. Certainly the community faces real issues with public transport service and traffic congestion on various roads and public transport services currently within Ryde and through Ryde very much at capacity.

...

Ryde serves as both a funnel for passing north-south and east-west commuter traffic and a significant destination for traffic in itself, as a result of its location within the global arc and the substantial commercial centre of the Macquarie Park corridor.²⁵

2.21 The Committee also received evidence from Mr Peter Duncan, Acting Deputy Director-General of the Department of Premier and Cabinet that highlighted the details and volume of traffic in the North West Sub-region. Mr Duncan advised the Committee that:

The residents of the North West, who make almost 2.8 million trips on an average weekday, travel more for work and work related business than the residents of other Sydney subregions (25% of the trips). The average distance travelled per person per day is 44 km (using all modes of transport) and the average Vehicle Kilometres Travelled (in cars) per person per day is 27 km. This is higher than the Sydney averages 36 km (total distance – all modes) and 20 km (Vehicle kms per day).

Commuting trip distance of 21 km is also higher than the Sydney average (16km). A large proportion (54 %) of the school children in the North West travel to school by private vehicle.²⁶

2.22 Correspondingly, Mr Kary Petersen, Transport Manager, of the Tourism and Transport Forum quoted the following statistics from the NSW Growth Centres Commission:

Residents in the North West make almost 2.8 million trips a year, at a rate of 3.7 trips per day per person, with 71% of these solely within the North West subregion. Each weekday, 79% of trips are made by vehicle, 7% by public transport and 13% by walking or cycling. The North West has the lowest proportion of public transport trips of any subregion in the Sydney Metropolitan.²⁷

²⁴ Clr Geina McCaffery, Mayor, North Sydney Council, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 4

²⁵ Mr Sam Cappelli, Manager, Environment, City of Ryde, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 5

²⁶ Submission 149, p 5

²⁷ Submission 140, Mr Kary Petersen, Transport Manager, Tourism and Transport Forum, p 4; *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, 2007, p 92

Committee comment

- 2.23** The Committee notes that although it received many submissions regarding the inadequacy of CBD commuter services,²⁸ the data presented by the Ministry of Transport, Mr Dobinson and Mr Stapleton demonstrated that the transport needs of the region are much more complex than simply improving CBD services and transport corridors. The data also demonstrates that the majority of transport movements and hence transport needs are within the region.

Is rail the solution?

- 2.24** A very strong message that became apparent throughout the Inquiry was that a rail link is essential to addressing the transport needs of the North West. (This will be discussed further in Chapter 3.) For example, local residents such as Mr Peter leMarquand wrote that '[o]nly rail can solve this transport dilemma'.²⁹ A similar comment from Mr Michael Belfield emphasised this:

Meanwhile the government dithers about Metro or Heavy Rail to the Hills, the area desperately needs a rail line.³⁰

- 2.25** Likewise Mr McLean submitted 'that it is beyond debate that the North West of Sydney needs more and better public transport especially a railway line'.³¹
- 2.26** However, during the course of the Inquiry, the NSW Government released the 2008-09 Mini-Budget and announced 'the decision to indefinitely defer the North West metro project'.³² This decision is discussed in Chapter 3.

Road solutions and upgrades

- 2.27** In addition to the rail solution, the Committee acknowledges the many submissions it received suggesting specific projects to alleviate road congestion. These projects are listed in Appendix 5. In summary, the proposed solutions range from improvements to existing bus services to revamping the bus network and many suggested solutions to North West roads and the M2 motorway to improve traffic congestion. Chapter 4 discusses improvements to bus services in more detail.
- 2.28** In terms of the proposed road improvements, it is beyond the expertise and resources of the Committee to consider the merits of these projects in detail, however it is the role of the Committee to bring these suggested projects to the NSW Government's attention for action.

²⁸ See for example: Submission 58, Mrs Leisl Kimber, pp 1-2; Submission 74, Ms Janet Morris p 1; and Submission 167, Ms Jennifer Farrer, pp 1-3

²⁹ Submission 14, Mr Peter leMarquand, p 1

³⁰ Supplementary Submission 18a, Mr Michael Belfield, p 1

³¹ Submission 21, Mr Ewan McLean, p 1

³² NSW Government, *2008-09 Mini-Budget*, 2008, p 3-2

The “car lover” tag

2.29 In several submissions, residents referred to being unfairly tagged as ‘car lovers’.³³ It appears that this tag is at least partly a result of a comment made by Mr Jim Steer in a report regarding the North West Metro, that the area is ‘wedded to its cars’.³⁴

2.30 In his submission, Mr Michael Richardson MP, Member for Castle Hill, referred to the Environmental Assessment and Concept Plan for the North West Rail Link, which illustrated residents’ reliance on cars:

Only seven per cent of total household trips are by public transport, the lowest proportion in Sydney. Not only is the level of car ownership the highest in the State, the distance travelled by motor vehicle per household is 27 km a day, compared with 11 km in Eastern Sydney. Clearly there is a high potential to get people out of their cars and onto public transport.³⁵

2.31 Evidence presented to the Committee confirmed that although residents rely heavily on their cars for transport, this may be a result of limited transport alternatives rather than a love of their cars.

2.32 In the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd submission, Mr Alex Gooding, Executive Director, discussed how this reliance on cars originated, stating that residents ‘had no choice’ but to rely on cars due to the lack of alternatives:

Over many years urban release has been taking place on a massive scale in Western Sydney. The land was relatively cheap, due in part to its poor accessibility and a lack of services and facilities. Families moving into the area had no choice but to rely on the car as there were few public transport services and even basic facilities were either dispersed or available only in distant centres. The need for a second car (or a third) is now firmly entrenched in the minds of the population, with the result that high levels of car ownership are exacerbating income deprivation in many areas. To bring about any change will require a massive alteration to a lifestyle that has developed out of necessity.

In summary, Australian cities and in particular the fringes of these cities are highly car and oil dependent. In Western Sydney the private motor car is used for the vast majority of trips, 76% for work and 71% for all trip purposes.³⁶

2.33 Mr John Leckie, Traffic Spokesman for the Dural and Round Corner Chamber of Commerce, and Round Corner Traffic Taskforce echoed these comments by advising the Committee that:

The solution in our area to transport issues is your daughter or son turns 17 and you buy them a car. It is the only way they can get around. So all we are doing is putting more and more cars on the road day in and day out.³⁷

³³ Ms Margaret Whalen, Traffic Representative, West Pennant Hills Valley Progress Association, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 13

³⁴ ‘Metro a \$12b disaster, says buried report’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 July 2008

³⁵ Submission 101, Hon Michael Richardson MP, Member for Castle Hill, p 3

³⁶ Submission 181, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd, p 6

- 2.34** Witnesses advised the Committee that they would use public transport rather than their cars if this were possible. Ms Whalen outlined this situation as a representative from the West Pennant Hills Valley Progress Association, citing congestion and cost of tolls as two reasons why people would take up public transport:

The residents of the north-west are described as being car lovers; we have no choice. Given the congestion on the roads and the cost of the tolls no-one wants to drive if there is a viable public transport option. Since its inception, the M2 bus service has been overwhelmed with patronage, validating the point that if there is a reasonable service it will be utilised. However, this in itself is not a sustainable solution now or into the future. What we need is a rail—heavy rail.³⁸

- 2.35** In her submission, Ms Carter of the Round Corner Village Residents' Association, described a similar scenario:

Statistics show that northwest Sydney has a higher level of car ownership and residents are often criticised for their reliance on private vehicles. We believe that this criticism is unfounded and that habits in the area would change if a viable integrated transport system was designed to meet the needs of this area.³⁹

M2 bus services

- 2.36** As identified by Ms Whalen, bus services on the M2 motorway are overwhelmingly patronised. This is evidenced by the numerous submissions received by the Committee that described that the bus services from the North West to the CBD via the M2, while increasingly popular with commuters, suffered from overcrowding and lengthy travel times.⁴⁰ The submission from Mr Wayne Merton MP, Member for Baulkham Hills, summarised this situation:

[I]t is not unusual for Baulkham Hills Residents to face queues of up to 100 people in the morning at Baulkham Hills junction (at the corner of Windsor and Old Northern Roads) with a similar situation in Clarence Street, Sydney in the afternoons for commuters travelling home.

Baulkham Hills commuters are frequently forced to travel to and from the city whilst standing most, if not all, of the way.

Many commuters have expressed their concerns to me of standing in the bus whilst travelling on the M2 motorway at 100kph.

Commuters also complain of buses going past them at peak hours and not stopping as the buses are full.⁴¹

³⁷ Mr John Leckie, Traffic Spokesman, Dural and Round Corner Chamber of Commerce, and Chairman, Round Corner Traffic Taskforce, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 34

³⁸ Ms Whalen, West Pennant Hills Valley Progress Association, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 13

³⁹ Submission 157, Round Corner Village Residents' Association p 1

⁴⁰ See for example: Submission 70, Mrs Margaret Dean, p 1; Submission 170, name suppressed, p 1; and Submission 178, Ms Beverley Garrard, p 1

⁴¹ Submission 141, Hon Wayne Merton, MP, Member for Baulkham Hills, pp 2-3

Committee comment

- 2.37 The Committee notes that the North West Sector has a heavy reliance on cars. The Committee believes that residents of the North West Sector would use public transport if available.

Adverse impacts of lack of public transport

- 2.38 The lack of public transport in the North West has a number of adverse impacts, which were raised in evidence. These impacts are discussed in the following section.

Congestion

- 2.39 The combination of high population, housing and economic growth, dependency on cars and limited public transport options has resulted in congestion and long travel times in the region, particularly during peak periods.
- 2.40 Clr Bolitho, provided the Committee with data that illustrated the high traffic volumes leading to congestion in his Shire. Clr Bolitho told the Committee that roads in Baulkham Hills are carrying more vehicles than national highways:

I wish to point to examples of the critical load stress . . . Windsor Road, Baulkham Hills, 53,000 vehicles; Showground Road, Castle Hill, 37,400; Old Northern Road, Baulkham Hills, 36,000; Pennant Hills Road, West Pennant Hills, 71,600. By comparison let us look at three traffic counts on the national highway system surrounding Sydney: Pacific Highway, Wahroonga, 61,200; Hume Highway, Menangle Bridge Camden, 36,900; Great Western Highway, Mount Victoria, 12,300.

This pattern shows that our State-owned roads in Baulkham Hills shire are carrying more vehicles than our national highways north, south and west of Sydney. For example, Showground Road carries a maximum 37,000 vehicles, a single lane each way, which is nearly double the volume that Taree main street incurred before the bypass was created on the Pacific Highway.⁴²

- 2.41 Mr Charles Kilby, Chair, Traffic, Transport and Infrastructure of the Ryde Transport Forum explained to the Committee that the results of these traffic volumes on traffic congestion is that 'the northern districts is choking to death with traffic congestion. The population is increasing, business is growing exponentially, the public transport is at capacity, and there is insufficient parking.'⁴³
- 2.42 Mr Kilby used his personal experiences as an example to illustrate that traffic congestion is actually worsening:

I live in the Hornsby area and I work in the Ryde area—I have done so for the past 10 years. During that time I have noticed that the traffic peak hour used to run for about

⁴² Clr Bolitho, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 8

⁴³ Mr Charles Kilby, Chair, Traffic, Transport and Infrastructure, Ryde Business Forum, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 30

an hour, and it used to take me about 35 minutes to get from our home to work driving a car. The peak hour has now extended to a approximately a three-hour period and it takes a minimum of one hour to one hour 20 minutes to get from home to work if there are no car accidents along the road.⁴⁴

- 2.43** Further evidence of worsening congestion in the North West sector was reported in the NSW Auditor-General's report to the NSW Parliament on 9 December 2008. The Auditor-General's report included the RTA's analysis of 'average speed trend' for major routes to and from Sydney, including the M2/Lane Cove Tunnel/Gore Hill Freeway and Victoria Road – key routes for North West sector commuters.
- 2.44** Traffic speeds to the CBD in the morning peak via the M2/Lane Cove Tunnel/Gore Hill Freeway slowed to 31 km per hour in 2008. Traffic on that route flowed at 38 km per hour in 2007 and at 36 km per hour for the equivalent trip in 2004. The fall in travelling time on this route was the most dramatic for the seven major routes into Sydney.
- 2.45** In 2008, Victoria Road was the slowest of the seven major routes into Sydney with an average speed trend of 23 km per hour (22 km per hour in 2007 and 29 km per hour in 2004).
- 2.46** The Auditor-General's report noted that the overall result for the M2 corridor was affected by heavier volumes of traffic:

Although the introduction of the Lane Cove Tunnel was positive, the overall result for the M2 corridor was influenced by slower speeds west of Pennant Hills Road. Traffic flows through Lane Cove Tunnel have improved. However, travel times have been affected by heavier volumes of traffic around the western end of the M2 and the M7 connection.⁴⁵

- 2.47** The President of the NRMA, Mr Alan Evans, commented in the media that motorists were not deserving of such slow travel times:

No motorist using Victoria Road in morning peak hour deserves to travel at an average of just 23 kilometres an hour, a whopping 37 kmh below the speed limit...If this wasn't enough, averaging just 34 kmh during morning peak hours is a real slap in the face on a motorway signposted mostly at 80-100 kmh – and this is touted as one of the fastest of the seven corridors in morning peak...the slowing speeds illustrated a 'chronic failure' by the State Government to invest in the city's road networks.⁴⁶

Economic impacts

- 2.48** The Committee heard evidence from Mr Anthony Moran, President of the Sydney Hills Business Chamber that outlined the economic implications of congestion. First, Mr Moran explained that due to limited public transport, the majority of employees are required 'to travel about the region in a private vehicle. This causes extreme traffic congestion and long commute times, often making it difficult to attract staff.'⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Mr Kilby, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 30

⁴⁵ Auditor-General's Report to Parliament, 2008, Vol 6, p 80

⁴⁶ 'Peak-hour speed 31 kmh', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 December 2008

⁴⁷ Mr Moran, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 32

2.49 Mr Moran then went on to describe that in order to attract staff:

Employers are being pressured to provide corporate vehicles and fund the associated running costs in order to attract staff to the area. Hills-based employers are required to pay higher wages to subsidise the need for a private vehicle and the high tolls paid by employees using the M2 and M7 to travel to work. Organisations are funding private buses to ferry staff to and from out-of-area railway stations.⁴⁸

2.50 Finally Mr Moran described that transport issues are undermining the economic stability of the area:

Rumours of large businesses considering leaving the area due to transport issues undermine business confidence in the area. Staff morale is low as employees often arrive at work late frustrated and stressed having been caught in traffic congestion in and around the area.⁴⁹

2.51 In addition the Committee heard evidence that North West commuters are disadvantaged due to the combined effects of car dependency and rising petrol prices:

Due to the extraordinarily high reliance on private vehicles, rising fuel costs put pressure on wages for Sydney Hills employees. Price rises in any area impact the use of a private vehicle—be it fuel, insurance, registration or tolls—and weigh heavily on wages with disposable income being eaten up more quickly in The Hills than in other parts of Sydney where there are viable public transport alternatives.⁵⁰

Environmental impacts

2.52 Car ownership in the subregion is the highest in the state. Clr Bolitho outlined the impact of this statistic on the region's greenhouse gas emissions:

Currently we have one of the highest occupancy rates in Australia. That currently translates to a vehicle population in our shire of 145,800 vehicles. If we estimate a growth projection for housing and vehicles by 2031—and that is in line with the Metro Strategy—it will mean that we will have 90,000 and 243,000 motor vehicles. Our current greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles is calculated at 612,000 CO₂ tonnes. By 2031 it will be 1,020,600 CO₂ tonnes. That is an increase of 67 per cent. The Australian Government's stated preference is a 60 per cent reduction by 2050.⁵¹

2.53 As has been well documented, Mr Gooding explained in his submission that [e]xhaust gases add to pollution and increase global warming levels.⁵²

2.54 As well as the contribution to overall pollution and consequent climate change, motor vehicle emissions have a direct impact on residents, as local resident Mr Benjamin Kelly explained:

⁴⁸ Mr Moran, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 32

⁴⁹ Mr Moran, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 32

⁵⁰ Mr Moran, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 32

⁵¹ Clr Bolitho, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 7

⁵² Submission 181, p 5

Whilst it remains difficult to quantify the exact numbers and costs of deaths and illnesses associated with poor air quality resulting from motor vehicle use there is clearly a large indirect health cost. Furthermore there are quality of life issue for vulnerable persons (i.e. Asthmatics and people with respiratory diseases).⁵³

- 2.55** Clr McCaffery commented that increased use of public transport will help reduce pollution and also improve health outcomes:

There are important linkages between transport use, air pollution and health. Increasing use of public transport, walking and cycling are likely to have a dual benefit: reducing air pollution as well as factors for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer and osteoporosis.⁵⁴

- 2.56** Mr Petersen also commented that improved transport options are required to manage pollution and traffic congestion:

In an era of high fuel prices, concern about greenhouse gas emissions and rising traffic congestion, it is no longer acceptable to develop this region with such limited access to transport options. We must find more sustainable ways to grow.⁵⁵

Social impacts

- 2.57** Social impacts of the lack of public transport were also highlighted in submissions. These include the frustration and stress experienced by North West residents, and lost family/leisure time as a result of increased travel times.

- 2.58** Miss Claire Thompson, local resident, advised the Committee that she ‘suffer[s] daily as a result of poor public transport. Four-hour daily commutes are not uncommon which results in a terrible work/life balance’ and that she ‘will have an early nervous break down from all the travelling’.⁵⁶

- 2.59** Another resident, Mrs Eva Brundell, advised the Committee that she had to quit her job in the city because she could no longer cope with the stress of catching the M2 bus to the city or allocate the hours required to travel.⁵⁷ Although Mrs Brundell is now working in Parramatta she explained that:

We are being forced to live with medium density housing but are not being supported with decent infrastructure. I have even started to consider moving interstate, Sydney is a nightmare to get around and people are tired and cranky. I once thought I lived in the best city in the world but it is increasingly becoming a nightmare.⁵⁸

⁵³ Submission 117, Mr Benjamin Kelly, p 4

⁵⁴ Submission 152, p 2

⁵⁵ Mr Kary Petersen, Transport Manager, Tourism and Transport Forum, Evidence 7 November 2008, p 18

⁵⁶ Submission 91, Miss Claire Thompson, p 1

⁵⁷ Submission 23, Mrs Eva Brundell, p 1

⁵⁸ Submission 23, p 1

- 2.60** Mr Dermont O’Sullivan, President of the Annangrove Progress Association, emphasised the social cost on families, stating that it is ‘enormous’:

I know one family whose three-year-old thinks that dinner three nights a week in his whole life has been a sandwich in the back of the car trying to get home. He is three years old and three nights a week he eats dinner in the car, never at home. The social cost of all this is huge.⁵⁹

Equity impacts

- 2.61** Inequities experienced by the residents of the North West, as a result of poor public transport options was another issue raised by local residents.
- 2.62** Mr Kelly discussed that there are ‘certain sections of the public that are not able to drive due to disability, medical conditions (i.e. Epilepsy), and age. The lack of viable public transport options is an obstacle to such persons living productive and fulfilling lives.’⁶⁰
- 2.63** Another inequity was raised by Mrs Scicluna, who stated that residents are reliant on private bus services and that there ‘has been no move by the State Government to ensure equity in prices exists between commuters of the same mode of transport, regardless of provider.’⁶¹
- 2.64** Residents also discussed the inequity of the M4 and M5 toll cashback scheme, which residents see as discrimination against the North West as they do not receive a similar cashback for the tolls on the M2 and M7 motorways, Lane Cove Tunnel or the Sydney Harbour Bridge. This inequity is discussed further in Chapter 4.

Committee comment

- 2.65** The evidence presented to the Committee clearly demonstrates the adverse impacts the lack of public transport is causing to businesses, residents and commuters of the North West. It is imperative that the NSW Government improves the public transport to the area for the existing population, let alone the population that will be added in the future.

Promised transport infrastructure for the Sector

- 2.66** The following section outlines the key transport commitments made by the NSW Government in policy documents released since 1998.

Action for Transport 2010 (November 1998)

- 2.67** In 1998 the NSW Government released *Action for Transport 2010: an Integrated Transport Plan for New South Wales* and *Action for Transport 2010: an Integrated Transport Plan for Sydney*. In these

⁵⁹ Mr Dermot O’ Sullivan, President, Annangrove Progress Association, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 17

⁶⁰ Submission 117, p 4

⁶¹ Submission 46, Mrs Tamara Scicluna, p 1

plans the Government committed to a variety of projects to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and to meet the needs of growing suburbs.⁶²

- 2.68 A number of these projects were located in the North West, including:
- five “Rapid Bus Only Transitways”
 - road improvements to the M2, the Western Sydney Orbital (now known as the M7) and the Great Western Highway between Penrith and Katoomba
 - rail links from Parramatta to Chatswood via Epping and Epping to Castle Hill.⁶³
- 2.69 While most of the road projects have been completed, as is discussed below, the bus transitways have been superseded and the rail links have not been completed.
- 2.70 In evidence given to the Committee’s Inquiry into the Budget Estimates 2008-2009, Mr Glasson, Director General of the Ministry of Transport, said that he was ‘not sure of the status of *Action for Transport* in relation to the current Government.’⁶⁴

Transport Strategy for Sydney (December 2005)

- 2.71 In December 2005, the Government released the *Transport Strategy for Sydney (Transport Strategy)* as part of the *Metropolitan Strategy*. In the period between the release of the *Action for Transport 2010* and the *Transport Strategy*, the Government made several announcements, which were referred to in the *Transport Strategy*. These announcements are outlined below.
- 2.72 The *Transport Strategy* discussed the Metropolitan Rail Expansion Program, which was announced in June 2005. This Program was to extend the Epping to Castle Hill rail link to Rouse Hill and push the completion date to 2017 rather than 2010. As part of this Program the Government also announced a Sydney Harbour rail link from south of Central rail station to St Leonards by 2017 to provide additional capacity to support the extension of the network.⁶⁵
- 2.73 By the time the *Transport Strategy* was released, the Government had also announced that the Parramatta to Epping section of the Parramatta to Chatswood rail link had been postponed indefinitely. In regards to the remaining section, Mr Mason, Chief Executive Officer of RailCorp advised the Committee that the Parramatta to Chatswood rail link is expected to begin shuttle services in February 2009.⁶⁶
- 2.74 In the *Transport Strategy* the Government promised to progressively implement a network of 43 strategic bus corridors from 2006, supported by improved bus priority on all corridors by

⁶² *Action for Transport 2010: an Integrated Transport Plan for New South Wales*, p 44

⁶³ *Action for Transport 2010: an Integrated Transport Plan for New South Wales*, p 44

⁶⁴ General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4, *Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2008-2009*, Mr Glasson, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 32

⁶⁵ NSW Government, *Transport Strategy for Sydney*, 2005, p 165

⁶⁶ General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4, *Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2008-2009*, Mr Rob Mason, Chief Executive Officer, RailCorp, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 33

2012. Bus priority refers to electronic technology and physical infrastructure measures to improve reliability and reduce travel time. Electronic technology measures include implementation of the “Public Transport Information and Priority System”, which alters traffic signals to give priority to late running buses. Physical infrastructure measures include bus lanes, bus priority traffic signals and bus only links.⁶⁷

2.75 In evidence given to the Committee’s Inquiry into the Budget Estimates 2008-2009 Mr Glasson said that he thought the Rapid Bus Only Transitways listed in the *Action for Transport 2010* ‘are now superseded...by the Government’s commitment to the 43 strategic bus corridors.’⁶⁸

2.76 The *Transport Strategy* also mentions the North West Transitway (T-Way), which was opened in 2007.⁶⁹ The T-Way grew from two of the Rapid Bus Only Transitways announced in *Action for Transport 2010*. These were the Blacktown to Castle Hill route and the Parramatta to Mungerie Park route. However, the Blacktown to Castle Hill route was only constructed as far as Parklea and the remaining section from Parklea to Castle Hill was identified as a strategic corridor in the *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy*. The Parramatta to Mungerie Park route was built from Parramatta to Rouse Hill (which is near Mungerie Park).

2.77 The *Transport Strategy* identifies that north western road upgrades are planned to include:

- upgrading works and/or extensions on Schofields Road, Railway Terrace, Grange Avenue, Garfield Road, Hambledon Road, Richmond Road, Terry Road, Burns Road/Memorial Avenue
- possible widening of the M2 motorway.⁷⁰

2.78 The *Transport Strategy* discusses the Rail Clearways program, which was announced in 2003 to ‘improve reliability, capacity and safety on CityRail’s suburban network’.⁷¹ Several of the program’s original initiatives are relevant to the North West. These were the duplication of the Richmond line from Quakers Hill to Schofields and the construction of the Carlingford line passing loop. The status of these projects is discussed in Chapter 4.

2.79 The *Transport Strategy* also states that “Tcard” integrated ticketing for all public transport will be introduced by 2007.⁷² As is well known, this commitment has not yet been implemented. However the Government still intends to introduce an electronic integrated ticketing system, and is currently undertaking a process to procure a new system.⁷³

⁶⁷ *Transport Strategy for Sydney*, p 166

⁶⁸ General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4, *Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2008-2009*, Mr Glasson, Evidence, 19 November 2008, pp 32-33

⁶⁹ *Transport Strategy for Sydney*, p 170

⁷⁰ *Transport Strategy for Sydney*, p 170

⁷¹ *Transport Strategy for Sydney*, p 176

⁷² *Transport Strategy for Sydney*, p 177

⁷³ NSW Government, Public Transport Ticketing Corporation, *Details of submissions received for new electronic ticketing system have been released*, 31 October 2008, <www.pttc.nsw.gov.au/news.html> (accessed 3 December 2008)

2.80 Finally, the *Transport Strategy* discusses improvements to bus interchanges, stations and bus stops.

Urban Transport Statement (November 2006)

2.81 The *Urban Transport Statement: Responding to the Challenges of Travel and Transport within and across Sydney (Urban Transport Statement)* was released in November 2006 and focused on passenger transport.⁷⁴ In this Statement, the Government announced several new initiatives and the acceleration of some previously announced initiatives relevant to the North West.

2.82 The new initiatives were:

- an extension to the Rail Clearways program Richmond Line duplication from Quakers Hill to Riverstone by 2010 and Vineyard in 2012
- duplication of the Iron Cove Bridge to three traffic lanes and one bus lane, with the extension of the bus lane from Iron Cove Bridge through to Darling Street Rozelle
- providing additional road capacity at places which experience high levels of congestion (“pinch points”) by 2012.

2.83 The accelerated initiatives were:

- bringing forward the staging of the North West rail link to the Hills Centre by 2015 instead of 2017 as previously scheduled
- bringing forward to 2011 the expansion and improvement of commuter car parks at Blacktown, Seven Hills and St Marys (investigation of potential commuter car parking sites at Schofields/Quakers Hill was also announced).⁷⁵

2.84 The Government also stated that it was fast tracking for completion by 2012, bus priority works across the network,⁷⁶ although this was the same date as was previously announced in the *Transport Strategy*.⁷⁷ However, the *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, released in the following year, identified that an additional \$100 million was reserved for this project as part of the *Urban Transport Statement* commitment.⁷⁸

2.85 The *Urban Transport Statement* also defined 18 major transport corridors, which account for more than two thirds of daily trips made by Sydneysiders.⁷⁹ All of the Government’s transport infrastructure commitments for each corridor are listed in the Statement.⁸⁰ The major projects

⁷⁴ NSW Government, *Urban Transport Statement: Responding to the Challenges of Travel and Transport within and across Sydney*, 2006, p 1

⁷⁵ *Urban Transport Statement: Responding to the Challenges of Travel and Transport within and across Sydney*, p 21

⁷⁶ *Urban Transport Statement: Responding to the Challenges of Travel and Transport within and across Sydney*, p 3

⁷⁷ *Transport Strategy for Sydney*, p 166

⁷⁸ *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, p 99

⁷⁹ *Urban Transport Statement: Responding to the Challenges of Travel and Transport within and across Sydney*, p 1

⁸⁰ *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, p 15

are those previously discussed, such as rail links, strategic bus corridors and the pinch points strategy. Also listed are smaller projects such as air conditioning on all trains.

SydneyLink: The future of Sydney's transport (March 2008)

2.86 In March 2008, the Government released *SydneyLink: The future of Sydney's transport* and announced that the North West Rail Link would be delivered as the North West Metro.⁸¹ The Government maintained the timetable of delivering the rail link between Epping and the Hills Centre by 2015 and from Rouse Hill to the CBD by 2017, but changed the route from a Sydney Harbour crossing to a route via Ryde and Rozelle. A map of the proposed route is reproduced in Appendix 3. In regards to a Sydney Harbour crossing, the Government announced that a "West Metro" provided 'for an additional crossing of the Harbour, when required.'⁸²

North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy (December 2007)

2.87 The *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, was released in December 2007 under the *Metropolitan Strategy*. This document did not announce new initiatives, however it does provide greater detail on some of the projects discussed above. This document also lists the following transport infrastructure projects that have been completed in the North West, some of which are discussed in this chapter:

- North West Transitway between Parramatta and Rouse Hill Interchange and between Blacktown and Parklea to provide fast bus access between Sydney's North West and the centres of Westmead, Parramatta, Blacktown and Rouse Hill
- widening and upgrading of Windsor Road and Old Windsor Road, including a new Windsor flood evacuation route, to improve access between North Western Sydney, the Sydney Orbital Network and Parramatta
- Old Windsor Road/Norwest Boulevard grade separated intersection at Bella Vista
- Windsor Road Roxborough Park Road to Norwest Boulevard and Acres Road to Old Windsor Road widen to four lanes, Baulkham Hills
- Windsor Road Mile End Road to Boundary Road widen to four lanes, Rouse Hill
- Windsor Road Boundary Road to Henry Road widen to four lanes, Vineyard
- completion of the Parramatta Transport Interchange in 2006.⁸³

2.88 The *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy* also discusses two key connections of the region – linking the M2 to the F3 and the F3 to M7 link.⁸⁴ These projects are still in the planning phase and are subject to federal funding.

⁸¹ NSW Government, *SydneyLink: The future of Sydney's transport*, March 2008

⁸² *SydneyLink: The future of Sydney's transport*, p 10

⁸³ *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, p 101

⁸⁴ *North West Subregion: draft subregional strategy*, p 101

Public response to broken promises

2.89 A key issue raised throughout the Inquiry was the increasing frustration felt by many people in the North West toward the NSW Government for not delivering on the promises made in its many transport strategy documents.

2.90 Mr Moran described this frustration to the Committee:

There is a feeling of disillusionment and disappointment amongst the whole community that this rail link has once again been promised and reneged. Announcements of any rail link, such as the metro link most recently promised by Premier Jemma and Transport Minister John Watkins, are now being received with cynicism by the Sydney Hills community.⁸⁵

2.91 Local resident, Mrs Elvira de Neeff, also described that residents had been promised better public transport, but that it had actually worsened:

My husband and I have lived in the Hills district (Glenhaven) since 1983. In that time Hill's residents have been promised better, efficient public transport. However, the situation has not improved, but deteriorated.⁸⁶

2.92 Likewise, Ms Jennifer Farrer wrote that '[w]e are tired of promises and schemes which never leave the drawing board.'⁸⁷ Local resident, Mr Peter Egan also wrote that: '[t]hose who moved to the area in the past 10 years, optimistically attentive to promises of a rail line, have been duded.'⁸⁸

2.93 During the course of the Inquiry, the theme of the NSW Government breaking its transport promises was underscored by the Government's announcement that several transport initiatives in the North West had been deferred, including the North West Metro. These decisions are discussed further in Chapter 3.

Committee comment

2.94 The Committee shares the frustration that North West residents have with the NSW Government. The tenth anniversary of the release of the *Action for Transport Plan 2010*, occurred during the Inquiry on 23 November 2008.

2.95 In the 10 years since the Government released *Action for Transport 2010*, the Government has released many transport policy documents, yet has not delivered on its major promises. Projects such as the truncated Epping to Chatswood rail link are overdue and over budget. Meanwhile residents of the North West continue to sit in their cars, stuck in traffic.

⁸⁵ Mr Moran, Evidence, 10 November 2008, pp 32-33

⁸⁶ Submission 120, Mrs Elvira de Neeff, p 1

⁸⁷ Submission 167, p 4

⁸⁸ Supplementary Submission 48b, Mr Peter Egan, p 3

Chapter 3 Rail infrastructure in the North West

At the time this Inquiry was established the NSW Government was committed to delivering the North West Metro. The North West Metro replaced the long-planned for North West (heavy) Rail Link. There was some public debate questioning the wisdom of pursuing the metro option instead of the previously planned heavy rail link. This debate was in many respects effectively rendered redundant by the confirmation in the 2008-2009 Mini-Budget of the decision to indefinitely defer construction of the metro.

This Chapter examines the government decisions relating to the North West Rail Link and the North West Metro. It also examines the impact of the continuing non-delivery of major rail infrastructure on metropolitan planning for the North West Sector.

Heavy rail or metro?

- 3.1** Prior to the establishment of the Inquiry there was some public debate regarding the relative merits of a metro as opposed to a heavy rail link for the North West Sector. Giving impetus to this debate was the conclusions of a report, the *Sydney Transport Review*, commissioned by the then Treasurer. The report was written by Mr Jim Steer,⁸⁹ a world-leading transport consultant and a Director of *steer davis gleave*, a transport planning and consultancy agency based in London.
- 3.2** It was reported that the *Sydney Transport Review* concluded, among other things, that the planned 38 kilometre metro was too long to be viable as a metro, was predicated on a poor business case and would do little to alleviate the CityRail congestion crisis.⁹⁰
- 3.3** However, there was a general consensus among Inquiry participants that both the original heavy rail and the metro rail option provided benefits. When examined by the Committee, many witnesses took a pragmatic approach and focussed more on the absolute need for a rail option rather than nominate which of the two options was the better.

Pros and cons of heavy rail and metro

- 3.4** Among those Inquiry participants who were of a view to nominate one option as the better of the two, the heavy rail option was the clear preference.⁹¹ Of the submissions to the Inquiry that declared a clear preference of one option over the other, 29 declared a preference for heavy rail while 6 declared a preference for the Metro.

⁸⁹ The Committee extended an invitation to Mr Steer to provide evidence to it as part of the Inquiry. However, on 5 November 2008, Mr Steer advised that he would be unable to provide evidence either in person or via a telephone link.

⁹⁰ 'Metro a \$12b disaster, says buried report', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 July 2008

⁹¹ Example: Dr Philip Laird, School of Mathematics and Applied Statistics, University of Wollongong, Evidence, 7 November 2008; Clr Bart Bassett, Mayor, Hawkesbury City Council, 7 November 2008, p 11

- 3.5** Mr Kary Petersen, from the Tourism and Transport Forum favoured the metro option due to its ability to capture people's imagination and thus encourage greater public transport use; and the opportunity it provides to employ transit-oriented development strategies.⁹² However, Mr Petersen also noted that the argument on relative merits of the two options is ultimately outweighed by the essential needs for either one of them:

While there is scope for debate about the type of rail solution, the bottom line is that a mass transit option is essential to cater for the projected population growth.⁹³

- 3.6** In evidence before the Committee, Mr Dominic Johnson from the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC) provided a typical summary of the issues relating to the two options:

They both basically offer some very significant advantages but also suffer some disadvantages, as I am sure you are aware. The idea of disaggregating the metro line out of the existing heavy rail system is appealing because it will obviously not be impacted by many of the concerns, issues and problems with the existing heavy network. That is appealing in itself.

The route, as proposed up until a few months ago, is also appealing for a number of the NSROC councils and its speed and efficacy, if it is built according to specification, is highly desirable too. Nonetheless, there are some very real constraints with it. One is the interchange at Epping and whether people will be convinced to do two or three modes to get to work in the city. A second is whether geo-technically it is feasible and the third is, in itself, it is not a transport system; it is a spur, a start. The heavy rail option...similarly has some great attractiveness. It is a logical extension; it does not require a modal shift. It has high capacity, it has been long promised so that effective planning and thinking has gone around it and strategic land use planning decisions have been made in relation to it.⁹⁴

- 3.7** Mr Johnson advised that NSROC did not have a firm policy position with respect to one option over another. This was due to the fact that some NSROC councils directly benefited more from one option than the other. He concluded with a plea, commonly heard throughout the Inquiry:

Obviously, those councils through which either mode were to eventuate would favour that particular mode, so we will, as a ROC, I am sure continue the position. Look, just give us one – please think about giving us both, but just give us something.⁹⁵

- 3.8** The position of the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) was similar to that of NSROC. Mr Alex Gooding from WSROC told the Committee that in the past WSROC had lobbied for heavy rail links as being the single biggest priority investment for the

⁹² Mr Kary Petersen, Transport Manager, Tourism and Transport Forum (TTF), Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 21

⁹³ Mr Petersen, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 20

⁹⁴ Mr Dominic Johnson, Executive Director, Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC), Evidence, 10 November 2008, pp 10-11

⁹⁵ Mr Johnson, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 11

region.⁹⁶ However, he said that WSROC had not necessarily adopted an “either or position” with respect to heavy rail or metro:

We have not necessarily adopted an either or position. We supported the heavy rail line when it was proposed. We supported the metro proposal, but with some qualifications. They were around the fact that this was obviously a much more expensive project and, furthermore, if you were to embark on the metro strategy, in a sense there was no turning back on that.

3.9 Mr Gooding argued that if the NSW Government did not have the financial resources to pursue the metro option, then the original heavy rail option presented itself as a viable and pragmatic alternative:

...expanding the heavy rail system I think is a viable and pragmatic alternative. It was the original proposal. It costs probably less than half the metro proposal and does provide certain advantages that perhaps the metro system lacked, and vice versa. So, we have a pragmatic position about that. What is important is that we get some form of heavy rail in those corridors in the north-west and south-west, and that is a critical thing.⁹⁷

3.10 Among those Inquiry participants who argued in favour of the heavy rail option, two factors were commonly cited: the amount of planning already undertaken for the project, and the fact that, they believed, it was a much less expensive option. However, as is discussed in a later section, cost was a primary reason given by the Government for its decision to proceed with the Metro in preference to heavy rail.

Decision not to proceed with the North West heavy rail link

3.11 In March 2008 Cabinet made a decision not to proceed with the North West Rail Link and to instead proceed with the North West Metro. The announcement was accompanied by the March 2008 document: *Sydney Link: The future of Sydney's transport*.

3.12 The Committee was advised that Cabinet, in coming to that decision, was provided with advice and information on the benefits, advantages and disadvantages with respect to the heavy rail and metro options.⁹⁸ The advice indicated that the North West Metro was a superior option to the North West Rail Link, and in doing so noted the Rail Link also required a CBD Rail Link to operate effectively.⁹⁹

3.13 While the estimated cost of the North West Metro, at \$12 billion,¹⁰⁰ was universally known among Inquiry participants, there was some uncertainty about the current estimated cost of

⁹⁶ Mr Alex Gooding, Executive Director, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 14

⁹⁷ Mr Gooding, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 15

⁹⁸ Mr Peter Duncan, A/Deputy Director General, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 6

⁹⁹ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence, 19 November 2008, Mr Peter Duncan, Acting Deputy Director General, Department of Premier and Cabinet, p 1

¹⁰⁰ NSW Government, *2008-09 Mini-Budget*, 2008, pp 4-8

the North West Rail Link. There was a general belief that the Rail Link option was much cheaper than the Metro option, particularly given it only extended from the North West to Epping while the Metro continued on into the CBD. This in turn led some to question why it was dropped in favour of the Metro.

- 3.14** During the Committee's Inquiry into the Budget Estimates 2008-2009, the question of the cost of the North West Rail Link was raised with the Minister for Transport, the Hon David Campbell, MP. In evidence the Minister gave an estimate cost of the North West Rail Link as equal to that of the Metro:

I do have some advice from the Office of the Coordinator General that the north-west heavy rail line is approximately \$4.5 billion to \$7.5 billion. It does need, under that original heavy rail link, a second harbour crossing and that is approximately \$6 billion. So if you take the midpoint between the \$4.5 billion and the \$7.5 billion, and add it to the \$6 billion, you have about a \$12 billion project.¹⁰¹

- 3.15** However, in a later response to the same question, which the Minister elected to take on notice in order to provide accurate information, it was advised that the North West Metro was estimated to be at least \$2 billion less expensive, thus putting the cost of the Rail Link at \$14 billion:

In terms of capital costs the North West Metro was estimated to be at least \$2 billion less expensive than the combination of the North West Rail Link and the CBD Rail Link. Metros are less expensive than traditional rail and will be a key component of future rail transport in Sydney commencing with the CDB metro.¹⁰²

- 3.16** The advice that the estimated cost of the North West Rail Link project, incorporating a second harbour rail crossing, is \$14 billion dollars certainly conflicts with the general belief among Inquiry participants that the heavy rail was the cheaper option. Mr Aaron Gadiel from the Urban Taskforce argued that the public sector has inherent problems in accurately costing projects.¹⁰³ Mr Ken Morrison from the Property Council of Australia cited the North West rail link as an example of costings not being accurate. He said his understanding was that the cost of the harbour rail link project was closer to \$10 billion plus and nowhere near the \$2.4 billion amount that was originally announced.¹⁰⁴

- 3.17** In responding to the question on the comparative costs of heavy rail and metros generally Dr Philip Laird could only give a qualified answer:

That needs a very qualified answer. To work well, metros need high population density, which is not found out in Sydney's north west. We have it in and near our CBD - 10 kilometres either side of where we are at the moment. However, 25

¹⁰¹ General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4, *Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2008-2009*, Hon David Campbell MP, Minister for Transport, Evidence, 15 October 2008, p 15

¹⁰² General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4, *Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2008-2009*, Answers to questions taken on notice, 11 November 2008, Hon David Campbell MP, Minister for Transport, Transport portfolio

¹⁰³ Mr Aaron Gadiel, Chief Executive, Urban Taskforce Australia, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 42

¹⁰⁴ Mr Ken Morrison, NSW Executive Director, Property Council of Australia, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 47

kilometres to 35 kilometres out from here, I do not think a metro stacks up. Having said that, metros have some advantages. You can use smaller trains and therefore smaller bore tunnels, which cost less to construct.¹⁰⁵

- 3.18** The Committee was advised that the estimated cost of \$12 billion for the North West Metro included the cost of a crossing under the Parramatta River further up the harbour than the centre of the city.¹⁰⁶
- 3.19** From the advice it received the Committee was not able to ascertain the exact estimated cost of the second harbour rail crossing – and therefore the exact current estimated cost of the North West rail link to Epping.

Requirement for second heavy rail crossing of the Harbour

- 3.20** The Director General of the Ministry of Transport advised that the North West Rail Link could not be functionally delivered without the additional capacity derived from a second heavy rail crossing of the harbour.¹⁰⁷ Mr Glasson explained that capacity is determined by the limitations of the signalling system:

Currently, the Harbour Bridge has a limitation of three-minute headways – in fact the signalling system has a limitation of three-minute headways. So, the maximum capacity in either direction across the Sydney Harbour Bridge is 20 trains an hour, and I think that ultimately becomes the guiding factor on when you need to go for more capacity across the harbour.¹⁰⁸

- 3.21** The Mayor of North Sydney Council, Clr Genia McCaffery, said that she believed a second Harbour Bridge rail crossing was essential if new rail lines were added to the current system:

I think last year there was a forward plan that that [second rail crossing] was going to happen and there were stations proposed around Crows Nest and St Leonards. The reason we are saying this is essential is – and that was in the framework of metropolitan lines like the north-west and south-west – what happens is that trying to get into the city, that line coming through North Sydney is becoming more and more congested. At the moment, if you keep on adding more rail lines to that, that end up at North Sydney to the city, that line will become impossible.¹⁰⁹

- 3.22** Clr McCaffery conceded that a second Harbour Bridge rail crossing now appeared to be ‘pie-in-the-sky’ since the north west rail link had been abandoned. The Committee was advised that there were no current plans afoot regarding a second or other harbour crossing for any form of public transport, apart from the second crossing that forms part of the North West metro.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Dr Laird, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 6

¹⁰⁶ Mr Jim Glasson, Director General, NSW Ministry of Transport, Evidence, 19 November, 2008, p 5

¹⁰⁷ Mr Glasson, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 5

¹⁰⁸ Mr Glasson, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 24

¹⁰⁹ Clr Genia McCaffery, Mayor, North Sydney Council, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 8

¹¹⁰ Mr Glasson, Ministry of Transport, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 20; Mr Les Wielinga, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 20

Alternatives to a second rail crossing?

3.23 If construction of a second rail crossing of the Harbour Bridge was the primary factor for deciding against proceeding with the North West Rail Link, this raises the question of whether there are other mechanisms by which to overcome the current capacity constraints.

3.24 Mr Morrison told the Committee that he was aware of suggestions that increased capacity across the Harbour Bridge could be achieved by other means:

...there has also been some evidence from Gary Glazebrook from the University of Technology, Sydney, a transport expert, to say that you could put in a heavy rail link and run it with an existing system so long as you made some changes to the way the operating stock was worked through the system. I am not able to judge whether that is correct or not. Can we afford to pay for a harbour rail link or do we need a harbour rail link? That is a question mark in our mind or it is an unknown?¹¹¹

3.25 The Committee raised the potential of directing trains from a north west rail link down the Epping-Eastwood line, rather than the Epping-Chatswood line as a means of avoiding capacity constraints across the Harbour Bridge. In particular the Committee was interested to learn if there was capacity on the Epping-Eastwood line to accommodate the north west rail link. The response from the Department of Premier and Cabinet advised that this option was considered at one time:

The initial overview for the project included the option to run the North West Rail Link (NWRL) via the Epping-Eastwood Line. However, the direction of all trains from the NWRL through the Epping-Chatswood Link (ECRL) was the Government's preferred position taking into account operating plans, patronage and environmental impacts.¹¹²

3.26 The Committee infers from the response provided, that there is some capacity on the Epping-Eastwood line. The response also advised that capacity could be further increased if a proposal to Infrastructure Australia is successful:

The NSW Government has proposed to Infrastructure Australia to fund track enhancements in the North Strathfield to Berowra corridor. Should this project be funded, significant extra capacity would be provided for passenger and freight services.

3.27 During its Inquiry into the Budget Estimates 2008-2009 the Committee heard that RailCorp is reviewing a conceptual plan that, if realised, could increase rail capacity by 50 per cent on certain lines, including across the Harbour Bridge. The concept involves using single-deck trains instead of double-deck trains and a new signalling system.

3.28 The Chief Executive Officer of RailCorp Mr Rob Mason, explained the current concept involved a gradual move to a new system:

...the current concept is that essentially sector one, the Illawarra and the Liverpool up to Granville and across the bridge, the Hornsby area, could be single-deckers; they are

¹¹¹ Mr Morrison, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 47

¹¹² Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence, 19 November 2008, Mr Duncan, p 11

well suited to it, getting 30 trains an hour going over the bridge, but the remainder of the network could well stay as double-deckers.

...The detailed work is still to be done. As I said it is conceptual. The work we are looking at the moment is as we replace existing infrastructure can we replace it with a modern generation infrastructure rather than just replacing like for like? So if we come to a conclusion about automatic train protection and automatic train operation, that is built in as we renew existing infrastructure. Therefore, it is a marginal cost – not cheap; it is a marginal cost rather than just completely building it from new. We have to replace certain things as time goes by anyway.¹¹³

- 3.29** Mr Mason stressed that the plan was only conceptual at this stage. He also noted that it would take 7 years from the placing of an order for new single-decker trains to be delivered.

Government preference for metro as future of rail infrastructure

- 3.30** On 27 October 2008 a newspaper article reported the Premier as saying that if the federal Government did provide the initial funding for a CDB Metro, then all heavy rail extensions would be taken off the agenda, and that the construction of metro to the north west or the west or the south-west would become the preferred option over the existing heavy rail network.¹¹⁴

- 3.31** In evidence before the Committee, the Director General of the Ministry of Transport said that the government has clearly indicated that it is committed to developing metro as a long-term transport strategy:

I think the Government has made it clear that it will commence investment in the Metro Strategy. The extent to which those metros will be developed and the sequence in which those metros will be developed and the sequence in which they might be developed will depend on future funding and a whole range of things. I think the Government signalled its clear intention that its strategic preference over time is to develop metros in the west, the north west and in some of the other major corridors.¹¹⁵

- 3.32** As a result, Mr Glasson advised, transport agencies do not have a heavy rail link to the north west in their 25- year strategic forward planning.¹¹⁶

Committee comment

- 3.33** While acknowledging the comments of the Director General of the Ministry of Transport, the Committee notes that history would suggest that there is, at the very least, potential for the Government to again change its strategic plans with respect to transport options for the North West.

¹¹³ General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4, *Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2008-2009*, Mr Rob Mason, Chief Executive Officer, RailCorp, Evidence, 19 November, 2008, p 17

¹¹⁴ 'Macquarie Park the terminus for metro', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 October 2008

¹¹⁵ Mr Glasson, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 14

¹¹⁶ Mr Glasson, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 22

- 3.34** The Committee notes that a decision to proceed with a rail link for the North West is, unfortunately, unlikely. The Committee also notes, however, that if increased capacity across the Harbour Bridge or along the Epping-Eastwood Line is realised via other initiatives, the original North West heavy rail link proposal could, notwithstanding the Government's current commitment to metro, potentially find itself once again on the agenda.

Indefinite deferral of the North West Metro

- 3.35** The decision of the Government to defer implementation of the North West Metro was confirmed in the 2008-2009 Mini-Budget on 11 November 2008. However, this decision was well anticipated, as the Minister for Transport had announced the decision on 31 October 2008.¹¹⁷
- 3.36** In evidence, the Member for Castle Hill, Mr Michael Richardson MP, drew the Committee's attention to various statements by senior Government members, including the former Premier, Deputy Premier and Treasurer that a rail link to the north west was guaranteed, and in the case of the Metro, not dependent upon the sale of the electricity industry.¹¹⁸
- 3.37** Both the Treasurer and the Minister for Transport expressed regret at the decision, but noted economic circumstances had dictated that it had to be taken:

There has been much debate about the North West Metro. But the fact is to proceed with it now would be economically irresponsible. The State must only build what it can afford to build, and it is the right decision to defer this project.¹¹⁹

The decision on the North West Metro was taken given the size of capital required and the current economic climate. These are the hardest decisions we have had to make, but they have to be taken.¹²⁰

- 3.38** Mr Lawrence Nagy, Manager, Traffic and Road Safety, Hornsby Council, who appeared after the announcement by the Minister for Transport and prior to the Mini-Budget expressed the concern that it would be decades before the north west would be served by rail:

Council is extremely disappointed by the announcement by the Minister for Transport that the North West Metro has been deferred. The proposal to build the first section of the metro between Rozelle and the city indicates the largest growth areas of north-west Sydney will not be served by rail within the next few decades.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Hon David Campbell MP, NSW Minister for Transport, 'North West Metro Deferred', *Media Release*, 31 October 2008

¹¹⁸ Hon Michael Richardson MP, Member for Castle Hill, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 25

¹¹⁹ NSWPD (*Legislative Assembly*), The Hon Eric Roozendaal MLC, Treasurer's Mini-Budget Speech, 11 November 2008, p 11075

¹²⁰ Hon David Campbell MP, *Media Release*, 31 October 2008

¹²¹ Mr Lawrence Nagy, Manager, Traffic and Road Safety, Hornsby Shire Council, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 4

- 3.39** The 2008-2009 Mini-Budget states that the deferral of the North West Metro is “indefinite”. It notes that the deferral provides greater budget flexibility over the entire ten years of the State Infrastructure Strategy (SIS) to 2017-18:

There is an indefinite deferral of the \$12 billion North West Metro and approval of an \$1.8 billion allocation over the forward estimates for a Sydney Metro System. Over the four years to 2011-12, this offers a direct budget saving of almost \$1 billion.

...The indefinite deferral of the North West Metro provides significantly greater budget flexibility, over the entire ten years of the SIS, to address other priority needs.¹²²

- 3.40** During the public hearing on 19 November 2008, the Committee was advised that there was no specific timetable for the North West Metro project and no internal indication of the time at which it might come back on the agenda.¹²³

Committee comment

- 3.41** All Inquiry participants, including the NSW Government, acknowledge the absolute need for a rail link, either heavy rail or metro, to the North West. One media report noted that the Government had mounted a compelling case for a rail line to Sydney’s North West in its submission to this Inquiry.¹²⁴

- 3.42** The Committee agrees that a clear case has been made for the urgent construction of a rail link and believes that it should be built. However, it is also clear that the current NSW Government, notwithstanding its acknowledgement of the need, will not, for an indefinite period, proceed with a rail link and has no timetable to do so. However, the transport needs of the North West remain acute, and something must be done to alleviate them.

Decisions not to proceed with other heavy rail projects

- 3.43** While the indefinite deferral of the North West Metro was perhaps the most significant decision of the Mini-Budget in terms of the impact on the North West Sector, this impact was compounded by the deferral or cancellation of other transport infrastructure projects.

Duplication of Richmond heavy rail line

- 3.44** The Richmond heavy rail line also falls within the North West Sector. The initial Rail Clearways program included duplication of the Richmond Line from Quakers Hill station to Schofields station by 2010. An extension to the program from Quakers Hill to Riverstone by 2010 and Vineyard in 2012 was announced in the November 2006 *Urban Transport Statement*.

¹²² NSW Government, *2008-09 Mini-Budget*, 2008, p 5-3

¹²³ Mr Michael Schur, Deputy Secretary, Office of Infrastructure Management, NSW Treasury, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 3

¹²⁴ ‘North West Metro axed despite demand’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 November 2008

3.45 The 2008-2009 Mini-Budget announced that Stage 2 of the duplication of the Richmond Line, from Schofields to Vineyard, had also been deferred. It would appear that this project has been deferred until at least post the 2011-2013 financial year.¹²⁵

3.46 Both the Mayor of Hawkesbury City Council and the Executive Director of WSROC said that they considered the duplication of the Richmond line, as originally envisaged, absolutely necessary. Both also noted that the duplication itself was originally intended to be an interim measure in advance of the north west heavy rail link.¹²⁶

3.47 Mr Kary Petersen, Transport Manager, Tourism and Transport Forum also strongly supported the duplication of the line, particularly when taking into account the forecast population growth in the area:

Utilisation of passenger services will be largely enhanced with dual track along the entire line. The duplication to Vineyard, only recently delayed, would have transported about 6,000 commuters an hour from Vineyard all the way to Central with one train every 10 minutes—well above the 2,700 peak hour passengers in 2006. With the forecast population growth in the region, maximising the mode designed to move passengers in bulk is a no-brainer.¹²⁷

3.48 The Director General of the Ministry of Transport noted that the Richmond heavy rail line runs through the centre of the development of the North West Growth Centre. Mr Glasson emphasised that the Government is still committed to the amplification of the Richmond line and that it plans to sequentially amplify the line as development occurs within the growth centre.¹²⁸

3.49 Mr Angus Dawson, CEO, Growth Centres Commission said he believed that the existing rail service on the Richmond Line, with duplication to Schofields, would be adequate to meet the needs of the population growth in the North West Growth Centre in the medium term. His confidence was partly due to an expected slower take-up and development of released lands:

...we believed our population in the north-west growth centre would contribute about 10 per cent growth to that whole duplication process to Schofields. Considering the north-west, we have already rezoned 1,000 lots in Colebee. There are about 4,500 lots that should be rezoned and service-planned for North Kellyville in the next couple of months. We are now working on Riverstone and Alex Avenue, and they will be on exhibition, we hope, before Christmas.

When you consider the pipeline of that lot production, the take-up and, as my colleagues have said this morning, the now extended take-up because of the various financial markets and other constraints across the whole of the economy. I think that 10 per cent over a course of probably about 15 or 20 years is quite reasonable. The

¹²⁵ NSW Government, *2008-09 Mini-Budget*, 2008, p 5-4

¹²⁶ Clr Bassett, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 11; Mr Gooding, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 11

¹²⁷ Mr Petersen, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 19

¹²⁸ Mr Glasson, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 22

short answer is yes. I think the existing rail service that borders the very large precincts in the growth centres of Riverstone and Alex Avenue will service that adequately.¹²⁹

- 3.50** Hawkesbury City Council has a population of 62,000 people.¹³⁰ Under the Metropolitan Strategy, a further 20,000 people are expected to move into the area by 2031. No timeframe for the restoration of Stage 2 of the duplication of the Richmond Line has been given.

Extension of north west rail link to connect with the Richmond Line

- 3.51** The Committee heard that Hawkesbury City Council has long lobbied for the extension of a north west rail link to connect it to the Richmond Line at Vineyard. This lobbying initially occurred with respect to the heavy rail link, and was subsequently again undertaken with respect to the proposed north west metro. The Mayor of Hawkesbury City Council said that as well as providing a worthwhile and sensible intra-region network connection, it also provided a resolution to difficulties related to location of the site for the required maintenance and stabling capacity:

When the decision was made to go from the heavy rail that had been promised some 10 years-plus, which was going to happen from Epping to Rouse Hill, the Hawkesbury had always lobbied for it to be extended to Vineyard and not be something that was promised in the future because we all know when that occurs, the future staging is likely to never occur because of the extreme costs of adding on in the future. We actually got the Government to finally agree that the idea of extending to Vineyard was going to be worthwhile. Then when the change came and we went to metro from heavy, the same lobbying had to take place. When previous Minister Watkins came to the north-west only a matter of weeks ago, we again lobbied for the extension to Vineyard and got them to agree that it was a worthwhile consideration.¹³¹

Committee comment

- 3.52** The Committee agrees that the extension of an eventual North West rail link so that it connects with the Richmond Line is a sensible and worthwhile proposal, and should be incorporated into the transport planning for the North West Sector.

Parramatta to Epping heavy rail line

- 3.53** The soon to be opened Epping to Chatswood heavy rail line was originally conceived as a Parramatta to Chatswood connection.
- 3.54** While the decision to cancel the Parramatta to Epping section of the line was made well before the establishment of the Inquiry, many participants raised this issue as they saw it as an essential piece of transport infrastructure for the North West.

¹²⁹ Mr Angus Dawson, Chief Executive Officer, Growth Centres Commission, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 12

¹³⁰ According to 2006 Census data

¹³¹ Clr Bassett, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 8

- 3.55** Mr Cappelli viewed this link as part of the key solution to achieving a sustainable future for the City of Ryde.¹³² Similarly, the Executive Director of NSROC saw the link as an essential key and told the Committee the decision to truncate the line was short-sighted:

We believe that the decision to truncate the line was short sighted, and we also believe that part of the issues surrounding the absolute necessity for a north west line have been complicated by the decision not to proceed with that project in its entirety.¹³³

- 3.56** Again, the Committee acknowledges the merit and value of the original project. The Parramatta to Epping rail link has the dubious honour of being the first of what has subsequently developed into a long list of cancelled and deferred rail projects in the North West Sector.

Continued planning for a north west rail link

- 3.57** Notwithstanding the advance notice that it was to be deferred, some Inquiry witnesses who appeared at the public hearings held prior to the Mini-Budget took the, albeit forlorn, opportunity to argue and recommend that the project continue.¹³⁴ The majority of participants strongly argued and urged that, at the very least, the planning and preliminary work for a rail link be continued.

- 3.58** Dr Laird from the University of Wollongong was typical of other participants in his argument that planning must continue so that the opportunity is not lost when economic circumstances change:

There has been so much work done for heavy rail, we could at least continue planning, and when the economy picks up start to build. Sure we will need buses in the meantime, but at least we could make a commitment that this line will be built one day – sooner better than later – but continue the planning process.¹³⁵

I would also be [doing] advanced planning for a metro. Again, it takes a bit of money but it takes more time than money to secure these corridors so that if our generation feels that the economy is so bad that we cannot do it then at least we have not cruelled the option for future generations.¹³⁶

- 3.59** Similarly the Executive Director of NSROC argued that when the project is eventually resurrected, it must proceed as quickly as possible:

In conclusion, NSROC recommends at the very least the ongoing planning work surrounding this project, the tests, land acquisition and planning must continue so that

¹³² Mr Sam Cappelli, Manager, Environment, City of Ryde, Evidence 10 November 2008, p 6

¹³³ Mr Johnson, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 8

¹³⁴ For example Dominic Johnson: the broadest point in the overall summation of the submission that the NSROC collectively recommend is that the State Government keeps its promise to deliver substantive public transport infrastructure in the north-west sector including a metro and/or heavy rail line as envisaged in the SIS and the Metropolitan Plan, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 2

¹³⁵ Dr Laird, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 2

¹³⁶ Dr Laird, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 4

this opportunity is not lost, and when some future State Government has sufficient budget the project can be quickly activated.¹³⁷

- 3.60** Transport planning consultant, Mr Chris Stapleton said that experience had taught him the key in strategic planning is to secure the transport corridor, and that the mode of transport that uses the corridor should adapt and develop to meet changing needs:

I suggest that we use the railway right-of-way for buses first then light rail later and metro later. This is something that was beautifully taught to me about four years ago, "Chris, don't worry about the system, get the right-of-way. Don't worry about what is on the right of way, use it to the best."¹³⁸

- 3.61** The Committee was advised that the current planning work on the North West Metro would continue until early December, at which time a product definition report¹³⁹ will be finalised. Following that the focus of the team completing that work would switch to the CDB Metro.¹⁴⁰

- 3.62** Mr Peter Duncan said the planning work on the North West Metro could be used later, and, should the project proceed some point in the future the estimated completion time would be between six to seven and a half years:

As I understand it, the work that has been done to date would not be wasted if it was to proceed at a later date, and it would be approximately 12 to 18 months to actually start construction. I think that would then lead to a five to six year timeframe for delivery, as I know it at the moment. So any work that is done to date could be readily re-established and we could move through that type of time line.¹⁴¹

- 3.63** The NSW Government advised that it will continue its program of land acquisition for future transport corridors. It noted that this would allow it to retain flexibility for any future transport option.¹⁴²

Committee comment

- 3.64** It is beyond question that the North West Sector requires a mass public transport system, either metro or heavy rail. The need is immediate and acute. A rail link must be implemented as soon as it is economically practicable. Therefore any additional preliminary planning that can be undertaken, and required land acquisition to secure route corridors should be completed as a priority so as to reduce eventual delivery timeframes. The Committee believes that any such activity should incorporate an extension of the route to connect to the Richmond rail line.

¹³⁷ Mr Johnson, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 3

¹³⁸ Mr Chris Stapleton, Stapleton Transportation and Planning Pty Ltd, Evidence, 10 November, p 22

¹³⁹ Mr Glasson, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 27

¹⁴⁰ Mr Glasson, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 18

¹⁴¹ Mr Duncan, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 27

¹⁴² Supplementary Submission 149a, NSW Government – Ministry of Transport, p 2

Recommendation 1

That the NSW Government, as a priority, continue planning and undertaking land acquisition for a north west rail link from Epping to Rouse Hill and that this include an extension of the route from Rouse Hill to a point on the Richmond rail line.

That the NSW Government prepare a submission for inclusion of this project on the National Infrastructure Priority List, and, if the project fails to attract federal funding, the NSW Government fund the north west rail link.

Infrastructure Australia – an opportunity missed?

- 3.65** In May this year the Australian federal government announced a new national approach to planning, funding and implementing the nation's future infrastructure needs. The *Infrastructure Australia Act 2008* came into effect on 9 April 2008.
- 3.66** The aim of Infrastructure Australia is to develop a strategic blueprint for the nation's future infrastructure needs and – in partnership with the States, Territories, local government and the private sector – facilitate its implementation. In the 2008-2009 federal Budget the federal Government announced the establishment of a Building Australia Fund. Allocations from the fund, for infrastructure projects, will be guided by Infrastructure Australia's infrastructure priority list.
- 3.67** In August 2008 Infrastructure Australia called for public submissions from individuals and organisations nominating infrastructure projects for inclusion on the National Infrastructure Priority List. The first list will be handed to the March 2009 meeting of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). The closing date for submissions was 15 October 2008.
- 3.68** Infrastructure Australia developed the following goals and priorities to guide its work in assessing infrastructure proposals:

Goals

- Increased economic standard of living for Australians
- Environmental sustainability and reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- Better social outcomes, quality of life, and reduced social disadvantage in our cities and regions

Strategic priorities

- Expand Australia's productive capacity
- Increase Australia's productivity
- Diversify Australia's economic capabilities
- Build on Australia's global competitive advantages
- Develop our cities
- Reduce greenhouse emissions

- Improve social equity, and quality of life, in our cities and regions.¹⁴³

3.69 A number of Inquiry participants advised that they had made submissions to Infrastructure Australia which nominated either the North West Metro or North West Rail Link as priority infrastructure projects. The Tourism and Transport Forum advised the Committee that it had advocated the metro option.¹⁴⁴ Ken Morrison from the Property Council of Australia said that that organisation's work had pointed to high-capacity public transport access to the north west as being among the highest of the State's long-term infrastructure needs:

We did some work back in 2006 where we had the Centre for International Economics work very closely with us on then unfunded infrastructure needs and that came out very high among that process of the top 20 list of projects, and then we repeated that work for the Infrastructure Australia prioritisation submission that the Property Council put in nationally, and for New South Wales the north-west rail link in whatever form it might have taken was the top priority for New South Wales.¹⁴⁵

3.70 The NSW Government made its submission, nominating priority projects, to Infrastructure Australia in June 2008.¹⁴⁶ The 2008-2009 Mini-Budget listed the priority projects nominated by the NSW Government:

- M4 extension
- M5 expansion
- West Metro
- Northern Sydney freight rail line.

3.71 The 2008-2009 Mini-Budget papers state that these projects will only proceed before 2012 if they are substantially funded by the Commonwealth:

The Government will work with the Commonwealth and Infrastructure Australia to determine relative priorities in this period, including consideration of appropriate funding levels to other priorities submitted by NSW (including the Pacific Highway, Princess Highway, F3 to M2 and F3 to Branxton links, and Aboriginal and Regional water projects).

The Sydney Metro System has also been submitted to Infrastructure Australia.¹⁴⁷

3.72 Unfortunately, the North West Metro was not included in the NSW Government's submission. This issue was explored during the supplementary hearing into the portfolio area of Treasury, as part of the General Purpose Standing Committee No 1 Inquiry into the 2008-2009 Budget Estimates. That Committee was advised that the North West Metro was held to

¹⁴³ Australian Government, Infrastructure Australia, *Discussion Paper 1: Australia's Future Infrastructure Requirements*, p 3

¹⁴⁴ Mr Petersen, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 21

¹⁴⁵ Mr Morrison, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 39

¹⁴⁶ Mr Duncan, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 19

¹⁴⁷ NSW Government, *2008-09 Mini-Budget*, 2008, p 5-4

be unlikely to have met the criteria for submission and that at that time it was fully funded by the State Government:

The North West Metro and the south-west rail link were not included in the original submission. I think the view of government was that they would not have met the criteria for submission, in other words, being projects of national significance and having national impact. Firstly and secondly, they were at the time fully funded by the State Government. The projects that were submitted were projects that had not received a commitment from the State Government for funding and they were believed to be the projects that were amenable to the criteria set out in the Infrastructure Australia framework for consideration as projects of national significance.¹⁴⁸

- 3.73** The Chair of General Purpose Standing Committee No 1 commented that he would have thought the North West Metro and the south-west rail link would be regarded as projects of national significance given they deal with infrastructure supporting huge population groups in Australia's major city. The Chair went on to suggest that these projects should have been submitted, regardless, on the chance the federal Government may have allocated funds. NSW Treasury reiterated that projects were chosen for submission on the basis that they were thought to best meet the criteria:

I think you would see in our submission the quantum of funding we are seeking is pretty significant in relation to the overall Building Australia Fund. We would not expect the Federal Government to necessarily fund all of those projects, but we have chosen projects that we think best meet its criteria. In two instances we have submitted projects where we have received Federal funding to do the feasibility studies. This is the M5 expansion and the Western Metro. We think they are projects that are very likely to be given serious consideration both by Infrastructure Australia and the Commonwealth Government.¹⁴⁹

- 3.74** In evidence before the Committee the Mayor of North Sydney Council drew the Committee's attention to the conclusion of the NSW Government's submission to Infrastructure Australia, which she quoted in evidence:

Given Sydney's significance to the national economy, addressing the city's urban congestion and other capacity constraints is a national priority. Due to its flexibility road transport has been favoured over rail transport. This has contributed to the sub optimal use of the transport network and has escalated broader impacts such as urban congestion, noise and greenhouse gas emissions. In other words we must invest in public and sustainable transport if we are going to reduce the pressure on the road network and, in fact, reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Sydney.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ General Purpose Standing Committee No. 1, *Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2008-2009*, Mr Michael Schur, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure Management, NSW Treasury, Evidence, 18 November 2008, p 16

¹⁴⁹ General Purpose Standing Committee No. 1, *Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2008-2009*, Mr Schur, Evidence, 18 November 2008, p 16

¹⁵⁰ Clr McCaffery, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 4

Committee comment

- 3.75** The Committee notes that while the NSW Government was not confident that a rail link (either heavy rail or metro) to the north west would meet the criteria of Infrastructure Australia, other organisations are of a contrary view. However, the Government is confident that the CBD Metro and the West Metro do meet the criteria.

Perception of bias in provision of infrastructure

- 3.76** In evidence before the Committee a number of Inquiry participants referred to what they viewed as the disproportionate provision of public transport infrastructure within the Sydney metropolitan area. The Mayor of Baulkham Hills Shire Council noted that the Shire currently had 100 metres of railway track (less than it had in 1920) unlike its neighbouring areas of Blacktown, Parramatta and Penrith.¹⁵¹ The Executive Director of WSROC noted, what he believed to be, the tendency for projects to focus on services to the East:

I recognise that the Government has suggested that the central business district [CBD] metro will provide both relief in the CBD and a long-term basis to extend the metros. The problem in western Sydney is that we have had those sorts of commitments before and we are rather dubious about them. The classic is Parramatta to Chatswood, which has been truncated to Epping. There is a tendency with these projects for people to talk about extending things in Western Sydney and it is only the eastern half of the project that gets built. We for once want to start in outer western Sydney and build in, rather than start in the inner city and build out.¹⁵²

- 3.77** On 24 October 2008 the Premier announced plans for the CBD Metro line from Central Station to Rozelle and that funding had been sought from Infrastructure Australia. The Premier said the project was about setting in stone that Sydney would have a metro system.¹⁵³ It was stated that the CBD Metro would provide the basis for future extension to the north west and to the west.
- 3.78** The Committee was advised that a joint Commonwealth-NSW Government funded study was currently underway in relation to the West Metro. The study, which will develop the cost-benefit analysis and details, is scheduled for completion in early to mid 2009.¹⁵⁴
- 3.79** During his appearance at a supplementary Budget Estimates hearing before General Purpose Standing Committee No 1, the Secretary of the NSW Treasury advised that it was expected that both the CBD and the West Metro projects would be funded:

The CBD Metro you could view as part of a western metro. Whilst in terms of people and trips that is the corridor where there is greatest demand, on the advice we have, and the greatest capacity constraints, we have allowed here for the State to fully fund the CBD Metro and put to the Commonwealth that it might fund the western metro. If the Commonwealth said no, it wants to fund the CBD Metro then the State's

¹⁵¹ Clr Alfred Bolitho, Mayor, Baulkham Hills Shire Council, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 7

¹⁵² Mr Gooding, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 15

¹⁵³ 'New CBD metro plans announced', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 October 2008

¹⁵⁴ Mr Duncan, Evidence, 19 November 2008, pp 18-19

funding set aside for the CBD component, I would expect, to be then shifted over to the western metro, so it is one project and it is just a case of which part gets labelled as State funded and Federal funded.¹⁵⁵

3.80 The March 2008 *SydneyLink* document, which introduced the concept of metros, stated that the first priority for this new type of transport was the North West Metro. That document also stated that the Government's [then] next priority was a Parramatta to CBD Metro and subsequently a South East Metro.

3.81 A number of media articles made reference to reported comments that the NSW Government did not make a submission for funding of the North West Metro because it had been advised that, on the basis of political considerations, such a submission would be unsuccessful.¹⁵⁶

Committee comment

3.82 The Committee cannot confirm the veracity of these inferences. However, it does acknowledge that for the residents of the North West it is a suspicion that will likely be hard to dispel.

3.83 One way to help dispel this suspicion among the residents of the North West would be to clearly set out the relative merits of the CBD/West Metro and the North West Metro with respect to the criteria for Infrastructure Australia funding.

3.84 The Committee notes that the majority of travel movements are within the sub-region and not to the CBD. The Government should consider a North West metro link to Parramatta as an option for submission to Infrastructure Australia.

Recommendation 2

That the NSW Government issue a statement setting out the merits of the CBD Metro, West Metro and the North West Metro.

The impact of deferred transport infrastructure on metropolitan planning

3.85 As part of the Metropolitan Strategy process the Department of Planning prepared a number of draft subregional strategies, including one for the North West. The draft subregional strategy for the North West was released on 21 December 2007. The strategy included a number of housing and employment targets for each local government area within the North West. The final subregional strategy is due for release in 2009.

¹⁵⁵ General Purpose Standing Committee No 1, *Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2008-2009*, Mr John Pierce, Secretary, NSW Treasury, Evidence, 18 November 2008, p 16

¹⁵⁶ 'No votes in North West Metro', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 October 2008; 'Push for federal funding of Sydney metro', *The Australian*, 27 October 2008; 'Infrastructure spending must not be political: Turnbull', *AAP*, 27 October 2008; 'Northwest Metro rail link officially shelved', *Daily Telegraph*, 31 October 2008

3.86 All the local councils that appeared before the Committee were unanimous in condemnation of the decisions to defer the long promised rail link to the North West Sector and other rail projects. They were all also unanimous in the view that the urban planning that had been undertaken to date had virtually been rendered redundant by these decisions.

3.87 The Executive Director of NSROC said that the north west rail option, along with the south-west railway line, was the backbone of the Metropolitan Strategy. Mr Johnson said that in both the inner north and north sub-regional strategies, which cover the NSROC region, the north west rail option was the first and largest infrastructure commitment – and that there was not much else that was not either completed, near completion, or largely inconsequential.¹⁵⁷

3.88 Mr Johnson said local councils had agreed to housing and employment targets on the promise of infrastructure. He argued that without the north west rail link the work that had gone into the Metropolitan Strategy will be lost:

Without the promise of this key piece of infrastructure the Metropolitan Strategy and all the work, planning, consultation and trust that went with it will be lost. The Metropolitan Strategy will be nothing more than putting more high-rise into existing suburbs and, ironically, those centred around existing train stations currently unable to deal with their existing customer load. Essentially without this infrastructure there is no strategy for managed growth in Sydney.¹⁵⁸

3.89 Mr Johnson said that the Metropolitan Strategy had evolved through a partnership approach whereby councils brokered a deal to accept population and employment targets on the condition that it was matched by the delivery of needed infrastructure. He said that in some cases councils agreed to accept growth targets that were in excess of what they believed they could sustainably accept and deliver:

If you remove half of the equation, and you certainly remove the commitment of the State Government in terms of what it would put into that process, I believe the Metropolitan Strategy has no real merit. Essentially what is it? It is simply a series of housing targets, which may remain notional without infrastructure; employment targets, which also will remain notional without corresponding infrastructure; and very little else...If you have simply some housing targets and employment targets not matched by infrastructure, I do not see that as an acceptable strategy for growth in this city.¹⁵⁹

3.90 The Mayor of North Sydney Council said that councils could not be expected to keep on delivering their side of the bargain, to provide capacity within their communities for increased population and employment, and be given no public transport in return. Clr McCaffery added that councils across Sydney were “fed up to the back teeth”.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ Mr Johnson, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 3

¹⁵⁸ Mr Johnson, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 3

¹⁵⁹ Mr Johnson, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 6

¹⁶⁰ Clr McCaffery, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 8

- 3.91** The Mayor of Baulkham Hills Shire Council asserted that the decision to defer or cancel rail infrastructure had rendered their forward planning “dysfunctional”:

As a result, forward planning is dysfunctional and the paralysis of decision making is severely disruptive on local government forward planning strategies. Our current strategy has been based on the provision of a rail link being promised for the last 30 years and now it has been pulled completely. Finally we come to a series of broken promises in respect of that rail link within our Shire. The Rouse Hill town development and the reconfiguration of Old Northern Road in Castle Hill, together with the other planning matters that I have mentioned, are predicated on the provision, not the promise, of a railway station.¹⁶¹

- 3.92** The Mayor of Hawkesbury City Council told the Committee that without adequate public transport he cannot comprehend how the area will be in a position to cope with forecast growth:

Now with the announcement that the rail link will not go ahead, the impacts on our area, as well as Baulkham Hills, are going to be extreme. With the projections for the north-west growth centre, I do not know how the area will cope in the future.

Decisions made today will impact for the next 10 years. If we are expected to take growth in our north-west sector, including the Hawkesbury, we have to have a public transport and a road network to support that. When it comes to jobs locally, we have all been encouraged by the State Government and the Department of Planning to focus on local jobs. Without adequate public transport and without adequate roads, how can we attract key businesses to the area that are in a position to expand their operations so that we can employ people locally?¹⁶²

- 3.93** The Executive Director of WSROC said that while local councils will have to accommodate natural growth, without required infrastructure, the specific targets contained within the Metropolitan Strategy will need to be revisited:

One of the things that we have already indicated in meetings with the relevant Ministers is that councils will clearly push to revisit those dwelling, population and other targets. They are not sustainable. In fact, you could argue that the whole premise of the metropolitan strategy, the concentration of employment in centres and so on, has to be severely questioned particularly in those areas where the Government was proposing to establish centres based on new transport infrastructure. Obviously the region will still have to accommodate growth. One of the things you have to realise is that about 60-odd per cent of that growth is natural increase, so there will always be that pressure, but the specific targets that have been established by the Government, we believe, will have to be revisited.¹⁶³

- 3.94** During, the public hearing on 10 November 2008 the Committee explored the concern of councils that, notwithstanding the failure to provide infrastructure they could be held to agreed targets that are no longer tenable. The Executive Director of NSROC said that

¹⁶¹ Clr Bolitho, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 8

¹⁶² Clr Bassett, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 8

¹⁶³ Mr Gooding, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 13

councils were very conscious that the Department of Planning and the Minister 'hold all the cards in this area'.

- 3.95** Mr Johnson noted that all councils are currently preparing new Local Environment Plans (LEPs) and he was concerned that growth targets that may be directed into these plans will be unsustainable:

I will just conclude by mentioning that there is an ongoing process by which all councils across the State must prepare new local environmental plans [LEP]. The Department of Planning is directing those councils zone in those new planning instruments for a certain amount of new growth and in many cases the growth that they are pushing into those new planning instruments is 60, 70 or 80 per cent of the growth targets to be realised over the next 30 years. These documents have a much shorter time frame but the councils are already being pushed into designing planning instruments, which can accommodate that growth in a very short period of time. We do not think that is appropriate but, at the end of the day, the Minister has absolute discretion on what LEP is made and if those growth targets are realised in a much shorter time frame than the 30 years we were initially told, then the situation which we have all been describing of unsustainable communities, gridlock, high unemployment, people unable to get to work will occur sooner.¹⁶⁴

- 3.96** The supplementary submission from the NSW Government acknowledged that the population and employment forecasts had, in part, been based on the assumption of the delivery of significantly enhanced public transport capacity, and that forecasts will need to be revisited:

The Department of Planning has assumed enhanced public transport capacity due to a North West Metro (previously North West Rail Link) in their population and employment forecasts for the North West. This includes the assumption that the key centres of Castle Hill, Norwest and Rouse Hill would be serviced by rail access by 2015 (or 2017 for Rouse Hill).

Structure plans for the North West Growth Centre to be implemented by the Department of Planning also assumed a density of residential development based on a North West Metro being delivered to Rouse Hill by 2017.

These assumptions and forecasts will need to be revisited in light of the deferral of the North West Metro and, to a lesser extent, the reduced duplication of the Richmond Line (from Quakers Hill to Schofields instead of Vineyard as originally planned).¹⁶⁵

- 3.97** Following the Committee's first public hearing during which representatives from WSROC argued that the Metropolitan Plan had been rendered redundant, it was reported in the media that the Minister for Planning, the Hon Kristina Keneally MP, had acknowledged that population projections will need to be reassessed.¹⁶⁶ It was later reported that the Minister said that the entire north west subregional strategy would need to be updated:

¹⁶⁴ Mr Johnson, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 9

¹⁶⁵ Supplementary Submission 149a, p 3

¹⁶⁶ Australian Broadcasting Corporation, *Key Sydney plan redundant: councils*, 7 November 2008 <www.abc.net.au> (accessed 30 November 2008)

Ms Keneally also said the entire north and southwest subregional strategies would be updated following the scrapping of rail projects and increased growth for the areas.

“The Government won’t deny the planning challenges which result from the deferral of the North West Metro and staging of the southwest rail link, nor will we fail to meet them,” she said.¹⁶⁷

3.98 During the public hearing on 19 November 2008 the Committee sought advice from the representative from the Department of Planning on the figure by which its population and employment forecasts had been predicated on the assumption of enhanced public transport capacity, that is the figure by which those forecasts would likely need to be reduced now that the infrastructure had been cancelled. Mr Marcus Ray, Acting Executive Director of Metropolitan Planning advised he could not provide those figures as they would be determined by the current review being undertaken.¹⁶⁸

3.99 Mr Ray advised that the review should be completed by March 2009. He said that the outcomes of the review will feed into not only the finalised sub-regional strategies, but also into individual LEPs:

Given the recent Government decisions in the mini-budget, together with the changed economic outlook with the global financial crisis that has come upon us in the last few months, the more recent population and household projections that the department has published, and also the slowing in the take-up of development land release opportunities in Sydney over the last couple of years, the Minister for Planning has asked the department look at all those factors—not just the decisions that came out of the mini-budget but also those other important factors—and to prepare a report for her early in the new year. So we are heading towards about March 2009.

That would then be able to feed into a number of planning areas. Obviously, it would feed into completing the subregional strategies that would directly assist councils, and it would also feed into the department's individual work with councils in completing their standard local environmental plans. At a broader level that would then feed into the five-yearly review of the Metro Strategy that is scheduled to be completed in 2010.

Committee comment

3.100 It is acknowledged that the specific targets for population and employment growth, that were in part predicated on enhanced public transport infrastructure, can no longer be met. The Committee notes the concerns of councils that they may be held to previously agreed targets that they can not sustain. The Committee further notes the advice from the Department of Planning that the outcome of the current review is intended to feed into the completion of LEPs. The Committee therefore recommends that the population and employment targets be formally amended to reflect the sustainable capacity of local councils.

¹⁶⁷ ‘Homeowners paying for dumped rail links’, *The Daily Telegraph*, 21 November 2008

¹⁶⁸ Mr Marcus Ray, A/Executive Director, Metropolitan Planning, Department of Planning, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 28

Recommendation 3

That during the review of the metropolitan subregional strategies, scheduled to be completed in March 2009, the Department of Planning in consultation with local councils revise the employment and population targets for councils in the North West Sector, taking into account that some major transport infrastructure projects have been deferred indefinitely, and formally amend these targets to reflect sustainable capacity in individual LEPs and in the Metropolitan Strategy.

Impact on growth

- 3.101** It is agreed that population and employment targets for the North West Sector will need to be revised down to reflect the impact of the failure to deliver significant transport infrastructure. However, natural growth will occur irrespective of targets. Local councils who participated in the Inquiry stressed that without the promised infrastructure it will be difficult to accommodate natural growth in a sustainable fashion.
- 3.102** The Mayor of Hawkesbury City Council said that the Hawkesbury needed natural growth to survive economically. However, he believed that such growth was impossible without supporting transport infrastructure. Clr Bassett was of the view that the inability to provide a sustainable environment for natural population growth rates will inevitably see an exodus of people moving interstate:

We talk about public transport having an effect now and that we may have to pull down our growth numbers, but we have natural growth. We need sustainable growth for economic activity. We hear a lot about affordable housing and that we need to make it more affordable in Sydney. If we do not actually get some land, backed up by infrastructure, we are not actually freeing up housing stock so other people can move into affordable housing, so a decision like this on public transport has enormous ramifications for us as a city. How do we provide affordable housing in a city the size of Sydney which has sensible public transport networks? If we do not have that and we do not have housing, living in Sydney will become more impossible and people and families will need to move interstate. There we go again; we have the same problem that we have had for a number of years with people looking for another State to go to. New South Wales and Sydney cannot afford that.¹⁶⁹

- 3.103** Similarly, Mr Gooding argued that patterns of growth will be affected by the fact that individual households are much more likely to take into account the cost of travel in their decisions about where to build and live. He believed that people will be less likely to move to designated growth centres that are located away from existing infrastructure, particularly when there was a previous commitment to deliver infrastructure that was subsequently not met.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ Clr Bassett, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 13

¹⁷⁰ Mr Gooding, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 14

- 3.104** Some Inquiry participants also raised the plight of individuals and businesses that had made life choices and business investment decisions on the assumption that a rail link to the North West would occur.¹⁷¹
- 3.105** The Executive Director of WSROC said that the north west subregion, which includes the North West Sector is the largest subregion by population in Sydney and has one of the fastest rates of growth. Mr Gooding said the lack of significant public transport infrastructure will make it difficult to just maintain the current level of local employment, and that this is likely to place a greater strain on the transport system right across the greater western Sydney:

In the Metropolitan Strategy, apart from the dwelling projections that all councils in the region are now questioning in light of the recent infrastructure decisions, it also contains a number of projections or targets for employment. At best, they amount to maintaining the current level of what you would call 'employment containment' in the region, which is the proportion of the workforce that is actually employed within greater Western Sydney, which is round about the 65 per cent level. That figure was reached in the early 1990s and has not improved since. In other words,, employment has grown but its growth has only kept level with the population – it has not grown faster than the population.

Some research that is currently being completed for us indicates that the region will struggle to maintain even a containment level, as forecast in the Metropolitan Strategy. It will take a lot of concerted effort, including investment in infrastructure by all three levels of government, just to maintain that level of employment in the region. The corollary of failing to maintain that target is this. Even maintaining the 65 per cent containment target, over the next 25 years there will be an additional 100,000 to 120,000 journeys out of region just to access employment. If we fail to maintain regional employment containment that figure will increase dramatically. So there will be more strain on the transport system right across greater western Sydney.¹⁷²

- 3.106** Mr Gooding echoed the comments of many Inquiry participants when he argued that if the decision to defer the north west rail link was not reversed, or at least some alternative interim measures were not provided, the resulting congestion would make the region almost unmanageable.

Committee comment

- 3.107** Traffic congestion within the North West Sector is already intolerable. Immediate measures are required to help alleviate the current problems. In the next Chapter the Committee examines the transport measures the Government is undertaking in the North West Sector.

Wasted expenditure

- 3.108** In reacting to the anticipated decisions regarding deferral or cancellation of transport projects in the Mini-Budget, and to the previous decision to cancel the north west heavy rail link, many Inquiry participants bemoaned what they saw as a waste of taxpayers' money over decades in

¹⁷¹ For example, Clr Bassett, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 9; The Hon Michael Richardson MP, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 25

¹⁷² Mr Gooding, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 9

terms of the amount of planning and other costs for those links.¹⁷³ As well as the expenditure incurred by the State Government, the Committee was advised that many local councils had expended significant funds in preparation for projects that have subsequently been cancelled or deferred.

State Government expenditure

- 3.109** During the Inquiry the Committee requested information on the costs, including staffing, planning and advertising, incurred with respect to both the North West Rail Link and the North West Metro. In answers to questions taken on notice during the hearing, the Department of Premier and Cabinet advised the Committee that total expenditure to date on the North West Metro is approximately \$37 million:

... the total expenditure for the North West metro to 31 October 2008 is \$35.4 million, with a total forecast cost of \$42 million for the Project Definition Phase of the project. These amounts include costs incurred by the Ministry of Transport, the Transport Infrastructure Development Corporation and the Office of the Coordinator General.

The budget allocation for the North West Metro in 2008/09 was \$106 million.

... information from the Department of Commerce indicates that the total cost of all press, radio and television advertising as part of the public awareness campaign for the North West Metro is approximately \$1.4 million.¹⁷⁴

- 3.110** In addition, \$127.5 million has been spent to date on acquiring property for the North West Rail Link and the North West Metro.¹⁷⁵

Local government expenditure

- 3.111** Mr Gooding told the Committee that of the local councils that comprise WSROC, Baulkham Hills and Hawkesbury were those that had incurred the greatest expenditure for preparatory planning. He said that other councils, such as Blacktown, had also been affected but to a lesser extent.¹⁷⁶
- 3.112** Mr Gooding advised that it was difficult to assign a dollar amount to the expenditure incurred in planning as much of the affected councils' expenditure relating to the cancelled projects has been bound up in residential or commercial developments that may still proceed but which will now have to be extensively reworked or scaled back. Mr Gooding also advised that councils are still working through the ramifications of the Government's announcement on deferred or cancelled rail projects and have not yet reached a conclusion about their impact on other projects.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Mr Gooding, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 10

¹⁷⁴ Answers to questions taken on notice during evidence, 19 November 2008, Mr Peter Duncan, p 12

¹⁷⁵ Answers to questions taken on notice during evidence, 19 November 2008, Mr Peter Duncan, p 1

¹⁷⁶ Mr Gooding, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 10

¹⁷⁷ Answers to questions taken on notice during evidence, 7 November 2008, Mr Alex Gooding, p 1

- 3.113** The Mayor of Baulkham Hills Shire Council explained how they had suffered a \$40 million adverse cash flow due to the slowing in development due to delayed or cancelled transport infrastructure:

In those new release areas, and there are a significant number of new release areas in our shire, there is then also the acquisition of the open space requirements and the like under the section 94 plans. That comes down to a timing issue of when we do them. That has created a mammoth dislocation of Baulkham Hills Shire Council's forward finance cash flows to the tune of \$40 million adverse cash flow. That is a figure that no local government area has the capacity of carrying without proper infrastructure being provided. The lack of that infrastructure will slow down those release areas and will then adversely affect the rate of the section 94 contributions being made available to council to recompense against the forward acquisition costs.¹⁷⁸

- 3.114** The Committee sought to raise with the representative from the NSW Treasury the plight of those councils who had suffered financially because they had expended funds on development works that were reliant on the delivery of rail infrastructure.

- 3.115** From the evidence it received at the public hearing on 19 November 2008, it is apparent that the financial impact on councils is not under active consideration:

I am not certain how decisions that the Government made relating to the mini-budget and to transport in the area impact on decisions that local government will make about the infrastructure in which they need to invest in those areas.

...

I reiterate what my colleagues have said. Alternative transport strategies are being put in place as a result of the decisions out of the mini-budget. I cannot elaborate on it any more than that.¹⁷⁹

Committee comment

- 3.116** While the State Government is able to absorb the cost of wasted expenditure, local councils are less able to bear such financial burdens. The significant level of expenditure to date adds further weight to the Committee's recommendation that the NSW Government continue planning and land acquisition for a north west rail link, so that the rail link may be implemented as soon as it is economically practicable.

¹⁷⁸ Clr Bolitho, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 12

¹⁷⁹ Mr Schur, Evidence 19 November 2008, p 14

Chapter 4 The road ahead for the North West

The transport future of the North West Sector was, once again, reshaped by the NSW Government through the decisions contained in its 2008-2009 Mini-Budget. This Chapter outlines the transport infrastructure projects that did and did not survive the 11 November 2008 announcements. It also examines what can best be done for the North West in the short-term. The Chapter concludes with an examination of the arguments presented during the Inquiry on what is required in order to effectively plan and deliver an integrated transport system in the future.

Impact of the Mini-Budget

4.1 The Committee held its first two public hearings on 7 and 10 November 2008, prior to the Mini-Budget. As noted earlier in this report, the Committee was advised that it was not possible for representatives of various Government transport agencies to appear at one of the initial hearings, partly because of the Mini-Budget review of all State infrastructure projects that was underway at that time. The Government transport agencies subsequently appeared on 19 November 2008.

Transport infrastructure lost

4.2 While the deferral of the North West Metro was perhaps the most significant, and anticipated, casualty of the Mini-Budget, it was not the only transport project to be affected. The supplementary submission from the Government, provided on 6 November, listed the North West Sector transport projects that had been deferred:

Since the original submission to the Inquiry, the NSW Government has made a decision to defer the following projects in the NW sector:

- North West Metro
- Schofields to Vineyard Rail duplication
- Station upgrades at Vineyard and Riverstone
- Carlingford Line Passing Loop.¹⁸⁰

4.3 However, the Committee notes that Mini-Budget papers refer to the cancellation, not deferral, of the Carlingford Passing Loop.¹⁸¹

Retained or new transport infrastructure

4.4 While much of the impact of the Mini-Budget was well anticipated, many witnesses who appeared at the first two public hearings still held out hope that significant transport commitments would be retained. In expressing his hope, the Mayor of Hawkesbury City Council stated a prophetic concern:

¹⁸⁰ Supplementary Submission 149a, NSW Government, p 1

¹⁸¹ NSW Government, *2008-09 Mini-Budget*, 2008, p 5-4

...the fact that after all these years of planning we have come down to an additional 100 buses, or 140 if you count the ones in the southwest and the car park at Glenfield Station in the southwest, as being the sum total of the infrastructure investment that has been made, that would be a retrograde step and I can only hope that there is more in the mini-budget in the way of interim measures.¹⁸²

4.5 The NSW Government's supplementary submission also listed the transport infrastructure projects that would benefit residents and workers in the North West:

- duplication of Richmond Line: Quakers Hill to Schofields
- Epping to Chatswood Line opening in early 2009 (limited benefit)
- Victoria Road upgrade including Iron Cove Bridge expansion, bus priority and tidal flow
- various road network upgrades as part of 'pinch point' strategy
- expansion of bus priority across Strategic Bus corridors
- expansion of commuter car parks at Wentworthville, Blacktown and Seven Hills
- new station at Schofields and Easy Access at Seven Hills
- 20 new buses for the M2 corridor operating from February 2009, on top of the 100 new buses announced in October 2008.¹⁸³

4.6 At the public hearing on 19 November 2008, the Committee requested that it be provided with a detailed list of the transport projects that will be delivered to the North West Sector along with the timelines for each project.¹⁸⁴ The Department of Premier and Cabinet provided the following details, which should be read in conjunction with those listed in paragraph 4.5:

- Western Metro Feasibility Study
- Riverstone overpass (planning) (road)
- Castle Hill – Eastern Ring Road
- Mamre Road M4 Overpass duplication
- Bus acquisition for North West (in addition to 100 buses announced in Mini-Budget) (150 buses for private operators in North West and South West).¹⁸⁵

4.7 When the Minister for Transport announced the deferral of the North West Metro on 31 October 2008, the Minister also announced that the North West Sector would receive an

¹⁸² Clr Bart Bassett, Mayor, Hawkesbury City Council, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 10

¹⁸³ Supplementary Submission 149a, p 2

¹⁸⁴ The Hon Jenny Gardiner MLC, Chair, General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 29

¹⁸⁵ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence, 19 November 2008, Mr Peter Duncan, A/Deputy Director General, Department of Premier and Cabinet, p 15

additional 100 buses. The supplementary submission from the NSW Government noted that these buses would be used to address the immediate transport needs of the North West:

To address immediate transport needs in the North West Sector, the NSW Government has committed to the provision of further bus service enhancements. This includes the purchase of 300 additional buses across Sydney, with 100 of these to be rolled out to the North West Sector.

The additional buses will begin to be on the road by 2009. They will be environmentally friendly air-conditioned vehicles. Because they are equipped with the latest technology, such as low floor access, parents with prams and people in wheelchairs will be able to get around the city more easily.¹⁸⁶

- 4.8** The announcement of 100 new buses was met with some derision. This was understandable as the provision of the buses was, and probably always will be, linked in peoples' minds with the deferral of the rail link.
- 4.9** However, as the Committee heard throughout the Inquiry, buses are the only transport project likely to provide general relief to congestion problems in the short-term. Even if the North West Metro had not been deferred, it was not to have provided transport relief until 2015 at the earliest. The irony is that the transport problems in the North West warrant both the promised rail link and the additional buses.

Maximising the benefit of bus services in the North West

- 4.10** Mr Kenneth Dobinson,¹⁸⁷ Director, 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney argued that the needs of the North West Sector demand immediate action:

I believe if this inquiry is serious about doing something for the north-west sector it needs to be adopting strategies to focus not only on what you might do in the future but what you should be doing now because this particular sector of Sydney is not well served with transport. I am sure others have said that.¹⁸⁸

- 4.11** Mr Dobinson argued that the only solution that can be provided to the North West in the short-term was a bus network:

...you need a short-term plan, one that can help this sector. I do not care what you do. If you are going to put a road solution, a rail solution or any other solution in the north-west sector it is not going to happen for a decade, probably two decades. I am sorry. I have to live in that area. You cannot wait that long. Once you start to think of the short-term solution there is only one solution you can look at: it has to be a bus network. It is possible to deliver the north-west sector an effective bus network in this term of Government. I think that is vital.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ Supplementary Submission 149a, NSW Government, p 1

¹⁸⁷ Mr Kenneth Dobinson was a former head of the Roads and Traffic Authority (or its equivalent) and also worked on the Sydney 2000 Olympics Transport Authority.

¹⁸⁸ Mr Kenneth Dobinson, Director, 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 36

¹⁸⁹ Mr Dobinson, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 36

- 4.12** Mr Dobinson recommended to the Committee a detailed plan for a bus network for the North West Sector developed by the transport consultant Mr Chris Stapleton. The plan, which Mr Stapleton outlined in evidence to the Committee is discussed at paragraph 4.37.

Issues associated with the provision of new buses

- 4.13** Throughout the Inquiry a range of views were expressed with respect to both how the new buses, and indeed the existing bus service, should be deployed to best serve the community, and on associated issues that would need to be addressed in order for them function efficiently.
- 4.14** Mr Kary Petersen said the Transport and Tourism Forum welcomed the Government's announcement of 100 more buses to the region, albeit not at the expense of other critically needed long-term projects. Mr Petersen was of the view that buses provided the solution in the absence of major rail projects. He saw buses as an essential transition mechanism, critical for attracting commuters to public transport over the long term.¹⁹⁰
- 4.15** Mr Petersen argued that the role of bus services should be to serve as feeder systems and short hauls to ensure that other mass transport systems such as rail are properly patronised especially in peak periods. He believed the north west bus network should be reorganised to focus on connecting surrounding suburban areas with the current Richmond rail line. He argued against long haul express buses, as they compete, in his view ineffectively, with rail systems.¹⁹¹
- 4.16** The Committee agrees that transport services should be integrated so that maximum benefit is achieved. However, the Committee also notes the views of other participants that the role of buses is more than just serving as feeder systems to the rail network.
- 4.17** Ms Sandra Carter, President of the Round Corner Village Resident's Association stressed that residents' need a public transport system that does more than focus on commuting to work:

We need more buses to cater for commuters in both peak and non-peak times. People need a public transport service that recognises the rights of residents to participate in the educational, social and cultural life of our city. We need a service that does more than provide transport for people to get to work.¹⁹²

- 4.18** Mr Michael Watt, Development and Planning Manager, Norwest Land, told the Committee that a bus link from Blacktown to Castle Hill was an important cross regional link that needed to be when determining how the additional buses could be best used to meet current and growing needs.¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰ Mr Kary Petersen, Transport Manager, Tourism and Transport Forum, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 18

¹⁹¹ Mr Petersen, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 19

¹⁹² Ms Sandra Carter, President, Round Corner Village Residents' Association, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 14

¹⁹³ Mr Michael Watt, Development and Planning Manager, Norwest Land, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 48

4.19 The Executive Director of the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) outlined a number of issues that need to be addressed with respect to the provision of an effective bus service for the North West:

Of course the measures that Councillor Bolitho mentioned about the completion of the bus transit way, also the rollout of bus corridors and cross regional bus services throughout the region, which will require investment in substantially more buses than has been mentioned to date, and the provision of car parking at existing bus stops and transport nodes. There is also the issue of the capacity of some of those bus stops, in terms of the length of space available if additional buses are to be provided, as well as the difficulties that have already been experienced of terminating buses in the central business district because of the number of buses that are coming into the central business district.¹⁹⁴

4.20 With respect to the congestion experienced by buses terminating in the CBD, the Director General of the Ministry of Transport advised that the issue is currently being reviewed in consultation with the city council and others. Mr Glasson said that there was the available kerb space capacity to alleviate the problem, and that the resolution would most likely involve a reorganisation of set down and pick up points.¹⁹⁵

4.21 This issue of park and ride facilities was consistently raised throughout the Inquiry. While park and ride facilities are generally associated with rail car parks, for the North West park and ride facilities to enable access to the bus network is paramount.

4.22 With respect to the carparks located along the North West Transitway, the Committee was advised that there is potential to increase capacity. However, it was explained to the Committee that the aim was to reduce the need for people to drive to, and park at, the Transitway:

. . . they are at-grade car parks at the moment and they have the capacity to be redeveloped as multi-deck car parks into the future. The philosophy on the north-west transitway has been a combination of end-to-end services and integrated services going off the transitway and into the urban areas surrounding there, to reduce the need for people to drive to get to the transitway.¹⁹⁶

4.23 The Committee notes that, unless a bus stop is within walking distance, people do need to drive to, and park at, some access point in order to access the bus network. The proposal discussed at paragraph 4.37 has the potential to reduce the requirement for car access to the bus network.

4.24 Mr Lawrence Nagy from Hornsby Council said that the announcement of the 100 additional buses caused some concern because the current congestion has meant that bus operators are unable to meet their timetables.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ Mr Alex Gooding, Executive Director, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd, Evidence, 7 November 2008 p 11

¹⁹⁵ Mr Jim Glasson, Director General, NSW Ministry of Transport, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 9

¹⁹⁶ Mr Glasson, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 13

¹⁹⁷ Mr Lawrence Nagy, Manager, Traffic and Road Safety, Hornsby Shire Council, Evidence 10 November 2008, p 5

- 4.25** The Chief Executive Officer of the Roads and Traffic Authority advised of programs that will be implemented over the next two to three years aimed at improving bus travel times:

With regard to the congestion issues, a couple of programs are going on at the moment that affect the north-west. You mentioned the strategic bus corridors. That certainly is one of them. Corridors 3, 4 and 42 are out in that area, and we are looking at bus priority measures in that. They include bus jump stops, and they include better coordination of traffic signals. They include some marked bus lanes, as you suggested, to give priority to buses. There is also a pinchpoint program that is being planned at the moment and it will work up over the next couple of years, where we are looking at corridors, and looking at minor construction activities to improve traffic flows, like intersection problems and those sorts of things.¹⁹⁸

Committee comment

- 4.26** Buses will be the primary means of public transport for the North West for the foreseeable future. Therefore the level of service they provide must be maximised. The additional buses announced by the Government are required, given the lack of other public transport infrastructure. However, the buses will only provide limited relief if they become mired in the current traffic congestion choking the North West. Given the evidence of worsening traffic congestion on the M2 route, such as that contained in the Auditor-General's report of 9 December 2008, that may well be the fate of the additional buses and, more importantly, their passengers.
- 4.27** The Committee notes the transport initiatives aimed at improving bus travel times and the level of service the network can provide. The plight of the North West compels the Committee to recommend that these initiatives need to be implemented as a matter of urgency.

Recommendation 4

That the initiatives being undertaken by government transport agencies to improve bus travel times in the North West be progressed and implemented as a matter of urgency.

New bus service contracts for the North West

- 4.28** The bus service contracts for the North West area are currently being re-negotiated. This provides a timely opportunity to maximise what will be the primary public transport for the area for some time.
- 4.29** The Member for Hawkesbury, Mr Ray Williams criticised the current bus deployment strategies, where people cannot get on to the M2 city bus service, while other services appear to serve little purpose:

on any given day there can be hundreds of people lined up waiting to get buses to access that public transport and only a mere five or six kilometres down the road at

¹⁹⁸ Mr Les Wielinga, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 28

Rouse Hill we have the case where up to 100 buses are travelling around the suburban streets of Rouse Hill with nobody on those buses. This is due to the Ministry of Transport now organising our strategic routes in that area and not the private company that did it in the past.¹⁹⁹

4.30 The Committee heard that the metropolitan bus contracts are described as a “gross cost style contract” with patronage incentives. Therefore if an operator is able to carry more people, then the revenue from that growth in patronage is shared between the Government and the operator.²⁰⁰

4.31 Mr Daryl Mellish, Executive Director, Bus and Coach Association of NSW, said that until the announcement of the additional 300 buses, the metropolitan bus contract system had failed to deliver sufficient kilometres and services to the area that the bus industry would like.²⁰¹ The Association is currently working with the Government on the deployment of the 300 additional buses within the metropolitan and outer metropolitan areas.²⁰² Mr Mellish said that, as a matter of course, additional service kilometres will accompany the new buses.

4.32 Bus contracts for region one and region four are currently under review. They are scheduled to be implemented following public consultation in early 2009. Mr Glasson advised that the additional buses will, in some measure, be included in those reviews:

We are now in the process of major integrated network reviews for buses in both region four, which is predominantly the Baulkham Hills-Cherrybrook areas, and also in region one, which is the balance of the west and out to Parramatta and to Penrith. Those will be implemented following public consultation early and mid-2009. They will include in some measure the additional buses announced in the mini-budget. We are still working through that process right now.²⁰³

4.33 Mr Andrew Glass, from Busways Group Pty Ltd, which holds the contract for region one which includes part of the North West Sector explained that under the metropolitan bus service contracts it is very open for bus operators to provide services to wherever the community desires. Mr Glass said that the limiting factor is the Government’s allocation of kilometres to those contracts. Mr Glass said that his organisation would like to provide many more services, including more late-night and off-peak services.²⁰⁴

4.34 Mr Glass advised that he anticipates that the re-negotiated contract will be allocated an additional 445,000 kilometres annually to improve services. However, Mr Glass said that to improve services to the level that his organisation would like would require many millions of kilometres.

¹⁹⁹ The Hon Ray Williams MP, Member for Hawkesbury, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 32

²⁰⁰ Mr Darryl Mellish, Executive Director, NSW Bus and Coach Association, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 54

²⁰¹ Mr Mellish, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 53

²⁰² Mr Mellish, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 51

²⁰³ Mr Glasson, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 8

²⁰⁴ Mr Andrew Glass, Group Service Development Manager, Busways Group Pty Ltd, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 53

- 4.35 While the negotiations regarding the deployment of the 100 additional buses is on-going, the Committee was advised that it was anticipated that the majority of the buses would be deployed to operate on the M2 corridor and the North West Transitway.²⁰⁵

Committee comment

- 4.36 The bus network service for the North West must service the needs of the entire community, not just the needs of those who commute to and from work in the morning and afternoon peaks. The Committee heard from residents of the North West that they need more late night and off-peak services if they are to have a viable alternative to reliance on motor vehicles.²⁰⁶ The Committee believes that the amount of kilometres allocated within the bus contracts for the North West region must be significantly increased to allow for greater provision of off-peak and intra-regional services.

Recommendation 5

That the Ministry of Transport significantly increase the number of kilometres allocated within the metropolitan bus service contracts so as to provide for greater off-peak and intra-regional services.

Proposal for a bus network for North West Sector

- 4.37 Mr Chris Stapleton from Stapleton Transportation and Planning Pty Ltd developed a Sydney Integrated Transport Strategy (SITS) two years ago. As part of that plan Mr Stapleton developed a proposal for an integrated bus network for the north west. Mr Stapleton discussed the overall SITS and the proposal for the north west bus network during his appearance before the Committee on 10 November 2008.²⁰⁷
- 4.38 The bus network proposal involves three primary routes running all day through the local streets that would result in buses passing close to most households every ten minutes. Mr Stapleton said that a fundamental element of the network was that not all of the services would be city oriented:

. . . but basically you would have at least three routes running all day spreading through the local streets. I do not know how many of you know but after Castle Hill, there is Kings Road, Northwest Boulevard, Lindsey Avenue, Taylor Street—ordinary streets where those buses start, more buses by the way during the peak. And then another series of buses would come through from the Northern Road to Parramatta coming across. Another set of routes would come in from Penrith and then go right through to Sebastian Drive. I am using the names just to say every single one of the

²⁰⁵ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence, 19 November 2008, Mr Duncan, p 5

²⁰⁶ See, for example, Mr Dermot O’Sullivan, President, Annangrove Progress Association, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 17

²⁰⁷ Mr Chris Stapleton, Stapleton Transportation and Planning Pty Ltd, Evidence, 10 November 2008, pp 20-29

local streets that you can sort of think of as dead end streets would have a bus going up it, going somewhere, every few minutes on the cross-regional routes.²⁰⁸

- 4.39** Mr Stapleton said that his proposal could be introduced within three years at a cost of \$150 million dollars. Key elements of the plan are high-speed bus links between Castle Hill and Parramatta and Castle Hill and the Sydney CBD. Upgrading road works to create sections of Transitway, and some sundry works to create transit head of queues are required to implement the proposal.
- 4.40** The 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney believe that the proposal developed by Mr Stapleton could effectively meet the public transport needs of the North West sector for the ensuing ten years.²⁰⁹
- 4.41** At the public hearing on 19 November 2008 the Committee raised Mr Stapleton's proposal with the representatives of the various transport agencies. The Director General of the Ministry of Transport said he was not familiar with the specific details that Mr Stapleton put to the Committee. Mr Glasson did say that he would be interested in examining the proposal, as the Ministry was always interested in potential improvements in the delivery of bus services to the community.²¹⁰

Committee comment

- 4.42** The Committee endorses the stance of the Ministry of Transport, as expressed by its Director General, that it is always interested in new ways of improving the delivery of bus services to the community.
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Recommendation 6

That the Ministry of Transport expand bus services in the North West by constructing a dedicated bus lane on the five kilometres of road between the M2 and the T-Way.

That the Ministry of Transport provide the majority of residents within the North West region with light rail or bus services on a regular basis and within easy walking distance of their residences.

Raising revenue for more public transport via road demand initiatives

- 4.43** The Mini-Budget included new measures aimed at managing demand for road-use, which will result in increased revenue that has been earmarked for use in funding increased public transport.

²⁰⁸ Mr Stapleton, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 21

²⁰⁹ Submission 59, 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney, p 5

²¹⁰ Mr Glasson, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 16

- 4.44** Many Inquiry participants were in favour of road demand and road use management initiatives to reduce congestion.²¹¹ The Mayor of North Sydney Council, who gave evidence the day before the Mini-Budget was handed down, argued the case for the introduction of demand management tolling on toll roads and an expansion of the parking space levy across the Sydney Basin. Clr McCaffery suggested that the revenue raised should be invested in public transport:

We would like the Government to consider also demand management tolling. The most efficient means to reduce the number of private motor trips and to spread the hours of peak travel is to introduce demand management tolling on toll roads. We know that congestion is greatest during peak hours...increasing the supply of roads simply cannot meet the demand for roads. The introduction of demand management tolling, in which a greater toll is charged during peak hours, would have two impacts: first, it would actually increase the number of people per vehicle and, secondly, it would reduce the peak of vehicles, but encourage the spread of demand throughout the day. That would increase fuel efficiency because we know that stop-start driving increases fuel consumption.

We suggest that the money from expanded parking levy and from demand management tolling could be put into expanding public transport in Sydney. In closing, I reiterate that we urge the Government to invest in public transport. We must do this, as Sydney is facing ever-increasing congestion and we will face the king of gridlock that is seen in cities such as Jakarta.²¹²

- 4.45** It is generally acknowledged that the effectiveness of road demand measures aimed at easing congestion generally, or at peak times, is reliant on the existence or provision of alternatives for road users. That is, drivers must have the capacity to choose to drive in non-peak periods, or the provision of a viable transport alternative to driving. If these choices are not available to road users, then the road demand measures are in effect primarily revenue raising measures.

Time of day tolling

- 4.46** The 2008-2009 Mini-Budget announced that after full electronic tolling comes into effect on the Harbour Bridge in January 2009; time of day tolling will be introduced for the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Sydney Harbour Tunnel. In his speech the Treasurer said this was a new policy to meet the challenge of congestion in Australia's only global city.²¹³
- 4.47** Under the scheme the toll on these roads will comprise a 'peak' toll of \$4 (an increase of \$1 on the current toll); a 'shoulder peak toll' of \$3; and an 'off-peak toll' of \$2.50 (a 50c decrease). The 2008-2009 Mini-Budget papers forecast that this initiative will raise \$12 million in revenue per annum.
- 4.48** The traffic volume on the Bridge is approximately 165,000 per day. That daily figure is comprised of 85,000 people travelling south towards the city, and 75,000 motorists travelling

²¹¹ For example, Dr Philip Laird, School of Mathematics and Applied Statistics, University of Wollongong Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 4; Mr Stapleton, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 29

²¹² Clr Genia McCaffery, Mayor, North Sydney Council, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 4

²¹³ NSWPD (*Legislative Assembly*), The Hon Eric Roozendaal MLC, Treasurer's Mini-Budget Speech, 11 November 2008, p 11077

north out of the city. The peak toll period runs from 6.30am to 9:30am and from 4:00pm to 7:00pm on weekdays.

- 4.49** During his appearance before General Purpose Standing Committee No 1 during that Committee's Inquiry into the Budget Estimates 2008-2009, the Chief Executive Officer of the Roads and Traffic Authority explained that when there is a 2 to 3 per cent decrease in traffic volume, as is experienced during school holiday periods, there is a significant improvement in traffic flow.
- 4.50** Mr Wielinga further advised that an examination of the breakdown of the people using the road network during the peak periods showed that over 10 per cent of them did not need to be there during the peak period.²¹⁴
- 4.51** The Committee sought advice from the Roads and Traffic Authority of the estimated number of motorists it expected would change their travelling habits as a result of this new initiative. The advice subsequently provided to the Committee noted that no estimation could be given at this stage, but a small change is expected:

The estimated number of annual peak hour trips across the Sydney Harbour Bridge is 9,760,000.²¹⁵

The RTA is in the process of traffic modelling to assess detailed changes to traffic patterns resulting from a change in the tolling on the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Sydney Harbour tunnel. It is expected that there will be changes in the times that some drivers travel to take advantage of reduced tolls outside peak hours.

While there may be a small amount of change in the routes drivers choose as a result of higher peak hour tolls, past experience of toll changes indicate that such changes are temporary and drivers make their route choice based on a number of factors. These include travel time and overall costs, which includes the value of time travelled by the driver, the cost of running their vehicle, as well as any toll costs.²¹⁶

Car parking space levy increases

- 4.52** As mentioned previously the Mayor of North Sydney Council suggested that the current car parking space levy should be expanded and applied across the Sydney Basin.²¹⁷ Clr McCaffery said that the current car parking levy was a concern to council as it worked against future investment by developers in business centres such as North Sydney, and steered developers to other centres that are exempt from the levy.
- 4.53** The Mini-Budget increased the car parking levy but did not expand the system. The levy for the CBD and North Sydney/Milson's Point was increased from \$950 to \$2,000 per year, and

²¹⁴ General Purpose Standing Committee No 1, *Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2008-2009*, Mr Les Wielinga, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority Evidence, 17 November 2008, p 3

²¹⁵ The Committee assumes this refers to the morning peak period only.

²¹⁶ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence, 19 November 2008, Mr Duncan, p 14

²¹⁷ Clr McCaffery, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 4

for other areas, the levy increased from \$470 to \$710 per year. This initiative will generate \$58 million per year.

Toll cashback schemes

- 4.54** Currently a toll cashback scheme is in place for both the M4 and M5 tollways, whereby motorists may claim back the cost of the tolls. No such scheme is in place for the M2 tollway in the North West. This was raised as inequitable in 15 per cent of submissions.
- 4.55** Many of the submissions from North West residents argued that this inequity was heightened by the fact that while they did not have access to a toll subsidy scheme neither did they have a viable public transport alternative by which they could avoid using toll-roads.
- 4.56** The Sydney Hills Business Chamber argued that the lack of a toll cashback scheme to workers in the north west, who now pay up to four separate tolls each working day, places an unfair burden on those employees of north west based companies that commute from out of the area to their Hills-based place of employment. They said that this burden sometimes has to be carried by Hills-based employers by providing higher salaries in order to compensate, and compete for, quality staff.²¹⁸
- 4.57** The 2008-2009 Mini-Budget papers show that the Government is limiting toll cashback claims to journeys taken within the previous 12 months. This is estimated to realise increased revenue of \$300,000 per annum.
- 4.58** In evidence before the Committee the Chief Executive Officer of the Roads and Traffic Authority said that the cost of the cashback scheme was about \$100 million per annum, comprising \$70 million a year on the M5 and about \$30 million a year on the M4.²¹⁹
- 4.59** In his Mini-Budget speech, when discussing the need to protect the Government's AAA rating and the impact of potential increased borrowing costs, the Treasurer noted that \$100 million per annum is equivalent to 200 buses, 1,000 additional classroom teachers, or 30 new air-conditioned train carriages.²²⁰

Committee comment

- 4.60** Given the NSW Government's financial stringencies, the Committee believes it is unlikely that there will be any substantial change to the M4 and M5 cashback schemes in the foreseeable future.

Other funding options for rail infrastructure

- 4.61** The basic reason given by the NSW Government for its decision to indefinitely defer construction of the rail link for the North West was that it simply did not have the money to

²¹⁸ Submission 144, Sydney Hills Business Chamber, p 2

²¹⁹ Mr Wielinga, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 16

²²⁰ NSWPD (*Legislative Assembly*), The Hon Eric Roozendaal MLC, 11 November 2008, p 11074

build the line. During the inquiry a number of options by which to raise funds for transport infrastructure were raised with the Committee.

Public private partnerships

4.62 The submission from 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney argued that a full range of funding options need to be considered and, to that end, the NSW Government should seek to have infrastructure works undertaken through public private partnerships (PPPs).

4.63 10,000 Friends said that projects need to be packaged in a manner that optimizes their market attractiveness, minimises the direct costs to the community, and increases the ability to deliver the projects:

Only economically sound works should be undertaken, and PPPs should be based on the ethos of 'investment' with borrowed funds to be repaid rather than borrowing that increases public debt. This will ensure that PPPs are viable.²²¹

4.64 The Mayor of Baulkham Hills Shire Council told the Committee that it was his understanding, based on financial advice that he had received, that if a private sector partner was to operate a Metro it would have substantial forward costs and that those costs would have to be met by borrowing. He ventured that this might not be a realistic option given the current economic climate and the resulting borrowing capacity of the private sector.²²²

4.65 Rather than seeing the current financial situation as a disincentive to look to the private sector, Mr Petersen, Transport and Tourism Forum advocated the exploration of the potential for PPPs. Mr Petersen said that the current times demand such consideration:

Considering the current pressure on State finances and the situation in the global financial crisis, I think now is the time to employ different and innovative financial strategies to be able to provide services to people.²²³

4.66 In examining the issue with the Committee Mr Petersen said that issues such as whether a project is funded entirely by the private sector; the inclusion of service targets, and the inclusion of operating costs would all need to be considered as part of the eventual contract:

It depends on the service contract. Obviously, if the private sector is able to do it and it is able to take on the burden of those operating costs, then why would you not give it to them? Obviously, if there needs to be some sort of government contribution, as many transport services across the world have, then that is what it needs to be. But obviously it would be all set out in the contract and you would hope that the Government would have a contract that is transparent and detail such matters.²²⁴

²²¹ Submission 59, 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney, p 4

²²² Clr Alfred Bolitho, Mayor, Baulkham Hills Shire Council, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 15

²²³ Mr Petersen, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 21

²²⁴ Mr Petersen, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 22

- 4.67 Reports that emerged in the media on 8 December 2008 confirmed that the NSW Government is in possession of a proposal that recommends a means by which private sector funding for the North West metro could be secured.²²⁵

Proposal to fund the North West Metro

- 4.68 The former Premier, the Hon Morris Iemma MP, commissioned a panel of metro and infrastructure experts to advise on the metro option. The panel was chaired by the former head of the Olympic Roads and Traffic Authority, Mr Robert Leece and included experts from overseas and interstate. The report of the Committee was meant to be delivered in mid-October 2008, but newspaper reports state that it was not accepted by the Government until after the 11 November 2008 Mini-Budget.
- 4.69 As noted in paragraph 3.80, it is anticipated that both the CBD and the West Metro will be funded by the federal and the State Government. It was reported in the media, that a letter from Mr Leece that accompanied the report, advised that the combined funding from the federal and State Governments could unlock the funds to also pay for the North West Metro.
- 4.70 It was reported that if both governments were able to produce a combined \$8 billion to \$9 billion, then up to another \$12 billion could be generated from the private sector. The proposal is dependent on the ability to package the State and federal funds together and to issue civil, operations and finance contracts for all of the three metro projects together. This ability is dependent on the federal government not tying the Infrastructure Australia funds to a specific metro project.²²⁶
- 4.71 It was reported that the expert panel recommended three separate contracts to deliver the project: a low-risk civil tunnel and station excavation contract using government finance; a privately financed train operations contract, which carried higher levels of risk; and a financing contract.
- 4.72 The report is said to have concluded that ‘now is also a good time to be investing in transport infrastructure that will enable the North West Sector and Sydney to maximise economic benefits from the inevitable upswing in the economic cycle that will follow’.²²⁷

Committee comment

- 4.73 The Committee regrets that it was not made aware of this proposal during the information gathering stage of the Inquiry. If it had been aware it would have sought to examine the issue further during the public hearings. Nevertheless, on the basis of what has been disclosed, the Committee considers that the proposal, developed by a panel of transport and infrastructure experts, which reportedly could see the delivery of a much needed north west rail link, must be explored and pursued as a matter of urgency.

²²⁵ *Secret study shows buried metros can still be built*, Sydney Morning Herald, 8 December 2008

²²⁶ *Secret study shows buried metros can still be built*, Sydney Morning Herald, 8 December 2008

²²⁷ *Axed rail link had glowing report card*, Sydney Morning Herald, 8 December 2008

- 4.74 If insistence on the part of the federal Government that Infrastructure Australia funds must be tied to either the proposed West or CBD Metro is an impediment to this much sought for solution, then the State Government must commence negotiations to overcome this impediment and ensure that another opportunity to ease the pain of the North West Sector is not lost.

Material adverse event clauses

- 4.75 New South Wales has a strong history of the construction of road infrastructure via public private partnerships (PPPs). During the Inquiry the Committee heard that the contracts entered into as part of these PPPs can potentially act as a disincentive against the later implementation of public transport infrastructure.
- 4.76 The Committee heard that the contract for the construction of the M2 motorway included compensation arrangements – a material adverse event clause – that may have been activated if competing public transport was implemented over the life of the tolls on that road. The Chief Executive Officer of the Roads and Traffic Authority said:

It is called a material adverse event clause. It is in the M2 contract. It is not as straightforward as simply happening if you put a public transport corridor in there. The motorway company would need to demonstrate it had a material adverse event. Our judgement of the rail projects [north west rail and metro] that have been looked at to date is that that clause would not have been triggered but you do not know until you test it.²²⁸

- 4.77 Mr Wielinga said that, as part of a due diligence exercise, the Roads and Traffic Authority provided advice about the M2 motorway deed to the Ministry of Transport when it was examining the north west rail project.
- 4.78 The Committee was advised that it was common for such contracts to include material adverse event clauses, but that the actual construct of the clauses is dependent upon the contract negotiations in each case.²²⁹

Committee comment

- 4.79 Later in this Chapter the Committee discusses the need to plan for and develop an integrated transport system for Sydney. Part of that discussion focuses on the need for road and other transport infrastructure to be developed as part of an overall long-term strategy that recognises the need for, and includes the capacity to, change from one transport mode to another as demand and need changes.
- 4.80 The Committee believes that the contracts for any future road infrastructure developed by way of public private partnerships should be negotiated by the NSW Government and/or its agencies with a view to ensuring that the terms of agreement do not act as a barrier to the building of public transport infrastructure in the future.

²²⁸ Mr Wielinga, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 11

²²⁹ Mr Wielinga, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 17

Recommendation 7

That the NSW Government when negotiating contracts with the private sector for the development of road infrastructure ensure that the terms of agreement do not act as a barrier to the building of public transport infrastructure in the future.

Tax increment financing

- 4.81** In his submission and evidence to the Committee, Mr Ken Morrison, New South Wales Executive Director of the Property Council of Australia recommended “tax increment financing” (TIF) as an alternative method, to development levies, of funding infrastructure.²³⁰
- 4.82** Mr Morrison stated that TIF is used in 49 states in the United States of America as a model of establishing a growth area, such as the North West. Mr Morrison explained that TIF works by:
- identifying the tax revenue generated from a growth area
 - identifying the likely increase in tax revenue from the growth area after infrastructure is built
 - using the increase in the tax revenue to build the required infrastructure.²³¹
- 4.83** Mr Morrison said that although the best tax to use in a TIF model would be the GST, this is difficult as the GST is a federal tax and infrastructure is a state and local council responsibility. Therefore the Property Council commissioned PricewaterhouseCoopers to model the use of state taxes (stamp duty, land tax and payroll tax) for TIF. PricewaterhouseCoopers undertook this work via two case studies and found that:
- . . . a TIF would repay 75% of a metro rail station and accompanying infrastructure upgrades in the Sydney suburb of Gladesville in 18 years, and 75% of the infrastructure costs of the Sydney south west growth centre in 19 years.²³²
- 4.84** Mr Morrison said this represented ‘quite a good payback’ for long-term infrastructure and that TIF is an opportunity to replace ‘development levies, which are very punitive and stop the growth occurring.’²³³

Committee comment

- 4.85** The Committee did not examine this proposal in detail during the Inquiry, and it was not canvassed with other inquiry participants. Therefore the Committee has not formed a view on the practical merits or otherwise of the proposal developed by the Property Council of Australia. However, it acknowledges the basic premise behind the proposal, that if the amount

²³⁰ Mr Ken Morrison, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 43

²³¹ Mr Ken Morrison, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 43

²³² Submission 163, Mr Ken Morrison, p 13

²³³ Mr Ken Morrison, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 43

of development levies being charged is impeding growth and development, then alternative methods should be considered by Government.

Growth Centres Commission

- 4.86** The Growth Centres Commission (GCC) is the agency responsible for the supply of land and the coordinated delivery of infrastructure in the North West and South West Growth Centres. The North West Growth Centre is approximately 10,000 hectares. It lies within the LGA boundaries of Baulkham Hills, Blacktown and Hawkesbury. It is made up of 16 precincts, which are areas that will be progressively released over the next 30 years.
- 4.87** The GCC is responsible for coordinating \$7.5 billion of regional infrastructure for the North West and South West Growth Centres which is to be progressively delivered over the life of the Growth Centres. Regional infrastructure (for example regional roads and rail links) is funded in part by the Government through the Budget process and through a Special Infrastructure Contribution.
- 4.88** The Special Infrastructure Contribution (SIC), paid by developers, is intended to fund 75% of the cost of the roads, rail, bus services, open space, planning and delivery costs and land required for social infrastructure. The initial submission from the NSW Government said that one of the key transport initiatives identified for funding was approximately \$100 million to contribute to funding improvements to heavy rail services including the duplication of the rail line between Schofields and Riverstone.
- 4.89** The 2008-2009 Mini-Budget took the decision to merge the GCC into the Department of Planning. Mr Angus Dawson, CEO of the Growth Centres Commission, said that rationale behind the merger of the GCC and the Department of Planning was to expand the GCC's practices, expertise and experience State-wide. The merger would also realise a \$3 million saving by removing duplication of administrative functions.
- 4.90** Mr Aaron Gadiel, Chief Executive, Urban Taskforce argued that developer levies are not an effective means of raising money to fund public transport infrastructure, and that this has been evidenced in the case of the North West Growth Centre:

Developers can only proceed with development if they are confident that the end buyers of their product can afford to pay all of the costs plus the necessary margin for the developer themselves. In the north-west growth centre, development levies have been so high and so punitive that it has been impossible to profitably sustain any meaningful level of development in that region.²³⁴

- 4.91** Mr Gadiel said that when levies are set too high a vicious circle emerges that results in the infrastructure not being delivered:

Secondly, the idea that you can impose a levy on development to pay for these infrastructure items is naive at best. Generally the levies are so large that you just cripple the capacity of development, and government gets little or no revenue, and

²³⁴ Mr Aaron Gadiel, Chief Executive, Urban Taskforce Australia, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 40

you do not get the growth that is necessary to make the public transport infrastructure viable.²³⁵

4.92 The Mayor of Hawkesbury City Council argued that the power of the Growth Centres Commission has dwindled. Clr Bassett emphasised the need to ensure that levies collected by various government agencies, such as the RTA and Sydney Water, are utilised.²³⁶

4.93 The Mayor of Baulkham Hills Council, in noting that the Growth Centres Commission had reduced the opportunity for section 94 recoveries by local councils, urged the Committee to discover what levies had been collected by the GCC and where it would be expended:

With the changes that have taken place and its absorption back into the Department of Planning there is not even any commitment that we will get one red cent of the moneys they have collected from developers in our area, or will collect from them in the future on those new release areas. We understand that part of this parliamentary Committee's inquiries is to find out why these things have happened in respect of the RTA in relation to transport, but we would respectfully submit that it is also now appropriate in terms of our cash flow predicament that this Committee look further at what the Growth Centres Commission is doing, where it has collected the money and where it intends to spend it. If it is going to go into consolidated revenue, in our case, because of the cash flow situation we may well need to request that those funds collected by the Growth Centres Commission be returned immediately to the council and that all future levies by the commission come back to our council.²³⁷

4.94 The Chief Executive Officer of the Growth Centres Commission advised that with respect to the North West Growth Centre no monetary levies had yet been collected, but there were works in kind underway:

To date there has not been a cash contribution as part of the levy system within the Growth Centres Commission. That is because of a small anomaly in that the first precinct that has been rezoned and service-planned in that area of Colebee is subject to a voluntary planning agreement that was prepared with the Department of Planning around the time of the establishment of the Growth Centres Commission.²³⁸

4.95 The Committee was subsequently advised of the following works in kind being undertaken by developers, in three precincts, as off-sets against monetary contributions:

- In the Marsden Park Employment Precinct, which was released by the NSW Government in June 2008, the proponent will upgrade Richmond Road to a four lane divided carriageway from Townson Road to Grange Avenue as well as provide some major intersections. This length of road is about 1.7 kilometres. The work is estimated to cost nearly \$30 million. Tenders have been sought to develop a concept plan and subsequent detailed design of the road. The proponent is also currently undertaking detailed precinct planning at a cost of \$1.7 million.

²³⁵ Mr Gadiel, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 43

²³⁶ Clr Bassett, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 12

²³⁷ Clr Larry Bolitho, Mayor, Baulkham Hills Shire Council, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 14

²³⁸ Mr Angus Dawson, Chief Executive Officer, Growth Centres Commission, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 13

- In the Colebee Precinct, the proponent will also upgrade Richmond Road to a four lane divided carriageway from the M7 to Townson Road a part of its obligations under a State Development Agreement. This length of road is nearly 1.5 kilometres. The work is estimated to cost around \$20 million. Tenders have been sought to develop a concept plan and subsequent detailed design of the road.
- In the West Riverstone Precinct, the proponent is currently undertaking detailed precinct planning at a cost of approximately \$1.1 million in lieu of paying a Special Infrastructure Contribution for future industrial subdivisions in the precinct.²³⁹

4.96 As noted in Chapter 3 the Chief Executive Officer of the GCC advised that development of the lands released by the GCC has been slower than expected due to financial markets and other constraints. As suggested by Mr Gadiel, this could also be due to the high development levies developers are expected to pay. It may also be true as suggested by many that the failure to provide the north west rail link could make the Sector as a whole less viable as a residential development proposal.

4.97 The Special Infrastructure Contribution Practice Note, that details the infrastructure to be funded through the SIC, was under review at the time the NSW Government made its submission to the Inquiry. The updated Practice Note was released after the 2008 Mini-Budget. The Practice Note lists the following heavy rail infrastructure projects within the North West Growth Centre:

- Railway Station between Quakers Hill and Schofields
- Land (acquisition)
- Parking (for 220 vehicles)
- Duplication of rail line from Schofields to Riverstone.

4.98 The updated Practice Note included a new SIC levy for residential land in the two Growth Centres.²⁴⁰ Previously the developer contribution for residential land was \$355,000 per hectare of Net Developable Area. This amount was reduced by \$5,800 and is now \$349,200 per hectare.

Committee comment

4.99 The Committee believes that the imposition of levies for the provision of infrastructure which has been deferred for an unknown period of time – and which may never be built – undermines public confidence in the governance of the levy schemes. If levies relating to particular infrastructure are to continue to be collected then, at the very least, a timeline for the delivery of such infrastructure should be made known. If a credible delivery date is not attached to the relevant infrastructure, then the NSW Government should consider further reducing developer levies as they relate to the North West sector.

²³⁹ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence, 19 November 2008, Mr Duncan p 3

²⁴⁰ The Special Infrastructure Contribution for Industrial Land remained unchanged.

Integrated transport planning and implementation

4.100 Among Inquiry participants there was consistent criticism of the way in which transport infrastructure was planned and delivered in New South Wales, leading to unfavourable comparisons with other States such as Queensland, Victoria and Perth being drawn. This section looks at the need for the establishment of an integrated strategic transport planning and implementation authority; the need for a short-term plan and implementation for the North West Sector; and the need for a new overall long-term strategic transport plan for Sydney.

Focus on roads and neglect of rail

4.101 As noted previously in the report, the NSW Government's submission to Infrastructure Australia acknowledged that the comparative ease of road construction has led to it being favoured over rail construction, and that this focus on road-building has contributed to the sub-optimal use of the transport network and has escalated broader impacts such as congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.

4.102 Many Inquiry participants commented on the tendency for road expansion over rail infrastructure. Participants noted that there was a long history to what they saw as inequitable investment.

4.103 The submission from Dr Philip Laird, University of Wollongong, provides an overview of the investment in rail infrastructure vis a vis roads;

As noted in the Richmond Report (Review of Future Provision of Motorways in NSW 2005) Sydney's population has close to tripled over the last 50 years. Over this time, there has been a strong growth in car use. Since the early 1990s no fewer than 7 tollways (starting with the M4 in 1992 and including the Lane Cove Tunnel) have been built along with the M5 East Freeway.

Despite the expansion of population and roads since the mid 1950s, there has been very limited expansion of the rail system. The City Circle loop was completed in 1956, the East Hills line reached Bondi Junction in 1979, the East Hills Glenfield link was completed in 1988 and the Airport Link in 2000 and the Epping Chatswood Link is due in 2008. A light rail opened in 1997 from Central station to Wentworth Park and was extended in 2000 to Lilyfield. It could be usefully extended further.²⁴¹

4.104 Mr Alex Gooding noted that the focus on road over rail infrastructure is particularly apparent in Western Sydney, where since the 1930s there has been approximately 14 kilometres of rail added compared to over 100 kilometres of motorways. He emphasised that he was not implying the motorways were not needed, but simply highlighting the failure to balance investment in road and rail.²⁴²

4.105 In evidence before the Committee, Dr Laird compared the construction of rail infrastructure in Sydney to that in Melbourne, Perth and Queensland. Dr Laird said that NSW is lagging behind these States each of which has built significant additional, well patronised railways for

²⁴¹ Submission 81, Dr Philip Laird, p 2

²⁴² Mr Gooding, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 9

far less cost than the Epping to Chatswood link.²⁴³ Dr Laird said that this is reflected in the low patronage rates for RailCorp compared to the other capital cities:

RailCorp services showed a low increase in patronage in the five years to fiscal 2006-07. In those five years RailCorp patronage increased only 2 per cent; Melbourne went up 34 per cent...In the 10 years to 2007 Sydney's population increased by 10 per cent, but public transport patronage only increased 12 per cent. Each of Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth had larger population increases than Sydney and much larger increases in public transport usage than Sydney.²⁴⁴

4.106 In his submission to the Inquiry Dr Laird pointed out that in 1955-56 New South Wales railways moved 280.5 million passengers, while 50 years later, in 2005-2006, RailCorp moved 275.4 million passengers. This is a somewhat surprising fact, given the acknowledged overcrowding on some parts of the rail service. When asked by the Committee to offer a view on why NSW appeared to be so far behind other States, Dr Laird suggested that the fact that there had been no fewer than eight rail chief executives since 1995 and three major restructures had made it difficult for the agency to move forward.²⁴⁵

4.107 The Mayor of North Sydney believed that the focus on expanding the road network over the past decade was, in part, due to the push for public-private partnerships (PPPs) and the availability of private finance for road projects:

Part of it, I think, is that since the 1980s the State Government has been pushing public/private partnerships. The availability of private finance to fund road building has just increased, I think, the pressure on the State Government to give into the roads lobby, and to defer proper transport planning which meets the need of existing and future populations and this is particularly seen in places like Sydney.²⁴⁶

4.108 The lack of investment in rail infrastructure is worthy of condemnation. However, the Committee was cautioned to remember that roads and cars are and always will be a part of Sydney. Mr Dobinson said that in the city of Sydney 80 per cent of travel is by car and 20 per cent is by public transport. He said that all the forecasts carried out by 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney showed that no matter what you do in terms of public transport, most transport will still be by car. However, Mr Dobinson said that if you could just get 30 per cent instead of 20 per cent of people to travel by public transport then that would represent the "utopia" that transport authorities should be aiming to achieve.²⁴⁷

4.109 The Committee heard that one way of balancing the investment in road and rail infrastructure is to integrate the two into the one transport corridor. The different modes of transport can co-exist, or the capacity can be in-built so that one mode of transport can be replaced by another when demand requires such a shift.

²⁴³ Dr Laird, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 2

²⁴⁴ Dr Laird, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 2

²⁴⁵ Dr Laird, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 2

²⁴⁶ Clr McCaffery, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 3

²⁴⁷ Mr Dobinson, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 39

Transport integration in NSW and other States

- 4.110** The Committee was advised of examples in Brisbane and Perth where rail and road infrastructure have been integrated. Dr Laird cited the example of Queensland, where recently completed busways have had rail tracks laid within them, allowing for conversion to light rail. He said such options should be considered in NSW:

...we should look at what we do if any more are built. Queensland has rolled out several busways and is in the process of building more, and I am told that every one of them is capable of conversion to light rail. For example, if we go to a scenario as suggested by the CSIRO with petrol and diesel at \$8 a litre, it would become very advantageous to switch from buses to either light rail or heavy rail, because we can use home-grown electricity. Some of the new southern suburbs railway in Perth was retrofitted into the median strip of a freeway.

- 4.111** Dr Laird noted that many of Sydney's tollways and freeways do not have the capacity for retrofitting or conversion to rail because they are too steep in places to accommodate the grade required by rail. Dr Laird also said he considered it an opportunity lost that a corridor was not reserved down the middle of the western orbital when it was built.²⁴⁸

- 4.112** The Committee heard that the M2 motorway company had submitted a proposal for widening the motorway by one lane in each direction along certain lengths. Arising from that, discussions are currently underway regarding potential public transport infrastructure or road-based public transport as part of the widening proposal.

- 4.113** The Chief Executive Officer of the Roads and Traffic Authority said that it is undertaking initial modelling to see what could be possible in the widened corridor. Mr Wielinga said that one possibility being discussed was a dedicated bus lane. He noted that it made good sense to examine that option:

We built a transitway out in north-west Sydney, the North-West transitway. We have put bus lanes on Epping Road. I think it is commonsense to look at the bus connection in between those two, and we are simply doing that. It just makes good sense.²⁴⁹

- 4.114** The NSW Government's transport representatives were asked if there are reasons specific to Sydney, such as its geographic layout and urban sprawl, that hinder its ability to pursue combining rail and road capacity. Mr Glasson noted that the Sydney topography is more challenging for railway construction than it is for road construction. He also noted that within the inner areas of Sydney the lack of available surface land has led to the need for tunnelling for both rail and road projects, which has in turn resulted in much higher costs.²⁵⁰

- 4.115** The Committee was told by Mr Wielinga that the Roads and Traffic Authority does give consideration locating road and rail corridors together:

²⁴⁸ Dr Laird, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 5

²⁴⁹ Mr Wielinga, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 10

²⁵⁰ Mr Glasson, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 11

We do look at corridors and try to have joint corridors. A practical example of that is many of the large public utilities tend to follow transport corridors, particularly road corridors, as well. From time to time we look at locating road and rail corridors together. Jim mentioned geometric differences for those two modes. For a road project we can have a kerb radii of about 650 metres on motorway standard. For rail it is closer to 3,000 metres, so it is very often difficult to get compatibility between the two. The cost of land in urban areas is a significant issue, and having the right confluence at the same time where both projects are happening at the same time is an issue in itself. But they are engineering difficulties that have to be dealt with. It is not quite as easy as you think. Every now and then we give a young project manager a crack at it and say how can we make these things a bit more compatible, but they have not bettered us old blokes yet so we will keep trying.²⁵¹

Committee comment

- 4.116** The Committee acknowledges that it did not examine this issue further with Mr Wielinga at the public hearing. However, it believes his response is indicative of the fact that if the pursuit of joint corridors is not a firm policy or strategic objective then it is unlikely to occur. Particularly insightful was his comment that having the two projects happening at the same time was an issue in itself.
- 4.117** A more strategic approach to integrated transport would consider and plan for combined transport corridors as a single project. Such an approach would be more likely with a single integrated transport planning authority.

An integrated transport planning authority

- 4.118** A number of submissions recommended that a single integrated transport authority be established. Such an authority would be responsible for network-wide transport planning and prioritise and direct expenditure on transport infrastructure. When the concept of an integrated transport planning authority was raised throughout the first two public hearings of the Inquiry it was met with consistent support from Inquiry participants.
- 4.119** Much of this support derived from Inquiry participants' dissatisfaction with the apparent current inability to plan for and deliver over the long term; the perceived competitiveness and lack of collaboration between the various transport and planning agencies; and the frustration of having to deal with various agencies regarding the one issue.
- 4.120** Mr Ken Morrison believed there was a clear lack of the governance arrangements required to set, cost and deliver long-term transport priorities, particularly major capital intensive projects such as rail.²⁵²
- 4.121** Mr Kary Petersen, in advocating the need for an integrated transport authority for Sydney, drew the Committee's attention to Melbourne and Brisbane:

²⁵¹ Mr Wielinga, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 11

²⁵² Mr Ken Morrison, NSW Executive Director, Property Council of Australia, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 39

The TTF suggests the Government looks to models such as Metlink in Melbourne and Translink in Brisbane to examine how such a body could work in Sydney. Such a body would be best placed to undertake the necessary work to ensure planning and operation are integrated with the north-west region.²⁵³

...Basically, all the planning and operational services of those particular networks and government bodies are combined so that the marketing, planning and operational undertakings are coordinated in that central body. For instance, Metlink has the Metlink card and TransLink in Brisbane has the go card. That is a means for them to ensure integrated ticketing in those particular cities.²⁵⁴

- 4.122** The submission from the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC) recommended a single transport authority should be established to coordinate and integrate all modes of transport so as to avoid each mode being planned and operated in a competitive and self-serving manner. In evidence to the Committee, Mr Dominic Johnson said that NSROC did not have a specific model in mind. He said that the recommendation was borne out of its frustration of dealing with competing agencies:

It is problematic for us in dealing with the Roads and Traffic Authority, the Department of Planning, and the State Transit Authority et cetera. Without them having an integrated approach themselves, it makes our work much more difficult.²⁵⁵

- 4.123** Clr Genia McCaffery, the President of the Local Government Association, and Mayor of North Sydney Council said the LGA had long advocated a model, based on what occurs in South East Queensland, where mayors and the State Government meet regularly to examine planning and infrastructure requirements:

Three planning Ministers ago, when Craig Knowles was Planning Minister, the Local Government Association, through me as the President, urged that we adopt the southeast Queensland model. It is a very good model, where the mayors and the State Government get together around planning in southeast Queensland and make a direct nexus between growth and population and employment, and investment and infrastructure. They almost make a pact. They sit around the table; they have regular meetings. We have been pushing this model for a very long time. We have a strange, truncated version of it, where the ROC presidents, me as President of the Local Government Association, and the Director General of Planning meet on a regular basis to discuss the Metropolitan Strategy and the infrastructure that is needed.²⁵⁶

- 4.124** The Regional Organisation of Councils Presidents and the President of the LGA meet with the Director General of the Department of Planning regularly to discuss the Metropolitan Strategy and the infrastructure that is required to support its aim. However, Mr Johnson said that these meeting had evolved into nothing more than an opportunity for councils to air some grievances to be patiently listened to by the Director General of Planning.²⁵⁷

²⁵³ Mr Petersen, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 19

²⁵⁴ Mr Petersen, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 20

²⁵⁵ Mr Dominic Johnson, Executive Director, Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 12

²⁵⁶ Clr McCaffery, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 8

²⁵⁷ Mr Johnson, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p12

- 4.125** At the public hearing held on the day prior to the Mini-Budget, Mr Morrison expressed his hope the Mini-Budget would include some indication of governance reform:

If, as a result of the mini-budget process, we have a lot of cancelled projects and not some investment in governance reform, so going forward we would get better at this, then we have lost the projects but we have also lost the ability to get better at this.²⁵⁸

- 4.126** In his speech introducing the 2008-2009 Mini-Budget, the Treasurer indicated that better coordination between transport agencies would occur:

In a change from the past the RTA and transport agencies are working together to achieve this common goal: Better public transport and fewer cars on our roads.²⁵⁹

- 4.127** While the Treasurer's speech went on to outline individual initiatives such as the purchase of additional train carriages and buses, and new congestion measures, there was no clear indication of the extent of the new collaborative approach.

- 4.128** The Committee heard that a Transport Chief Executive Officers Cluster group meets on a monthly to two-monthly basis. This includes representatives from all the transport agencies and the Department of Planning, NSW Treasury and the Department of Premier and Cabinet. Mr Peter Duncan, A/Deputy Director General, Department of Premier and Cabinet, said there is a strong sense of collaboration among the group, and that it considers a range of transport and planning issues and deals with the State Plan, the Urban Transport Statement, the Metropolitan Strategy and other transport and planning related policy documents.

- 4.129** The Committee was interested to learn, in terms of advice that goes to Cabinet on transport matters, whether that group provides collective advice, or if each agency provides advice to their respective Ministers. Mr Duncan advised that both occur:

In all cases we do both in the sense that the cluster group, chaired by Mr Glasson, considers the issues that are of importance to transport as a group. We provide advice to a representative of Ministers and organisations, as requested.²⁶⁰

- 4.130** Mr Dobinson, a former head of the road authority, argued strongly in favour of integrated transport planning. Mr Dobinson emphasised the crucial element was to combine the transport funding pool:

We have a major problem in this State, and I am sure you all are very aware of it. We do not have integrated transport planning and that means integrated transport funding. On the one hand you have bus organisations, really the Ministry of Transport and the State Transport Authority with a budget that big; you have a road authority with a budget this big. When you start to think about planning an integrated system, you have to think about one budget and you must use it in the best way. I ran the road authority, God, I ought to know.

²⁵⁸ Mr Morrison, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 42

²⁵⁹ NSWPD (*Legislative Assembly*), The Hon Eric Roozendaal MLC, 11 November 2008, p 11076

²⁶⁰ Mr Peter Duncan, Acting Deputy Director General, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 7

- 4.131** Mr Dobinson cited the construction of the M2 motorway as an example of what can be achieved if the Roads and Traffic Authority was not solely focused on roads:

When that road was planned I insisted that we build the first stage of the public transport system from Chatswood to Parramatta—you have heard that before—on the M2. It had to be built with a central busway over the central section and able to be converted into light rail when it was needed because that is what the demand showed. That is there today; that is built. Who paid for it? We paid for it out of the road budget. Now, that is not happening.

...The road authority knows these things, but it is focused on roads. If you said to the road authority, to Les Wielinga tomorrow, "You are now responsible for all road transport and you will use your budget for it" he will build you a busway system and provide the buses for it out of his budget, without more money.

- 4.132** Mr Dobinson said that if it was better coordinated, much more could be achieved with the current average expenditure on transport:

It is rather fascinating, but when we did the Sustainable Transport and Sustainable Cities project in 2000 and 2003, we looked at all the money the Government was spending on transport in this city and we looked at what it needed to spend. We would have got the biggest shock of the lot because they were the same figure. We did not need any more money. We were just spending it so badly. It is not quite as simple as that, but we are just using the money badly.²⁶¹

- 4.133** The Committee questioned whether the provision of tied federal grants for road infrastructure would impede the effectiveness of a combined funded authority. Mr Dobinson believed that such challenges are capable of being overcome.

Committee comment

- 4.134** The Committee believes that the current capacity for planning, coordinating and delivering an integrated and efficient transport system for Sydney needs significant improvement. On the weight of the evidence it received during the Inquiry, it agrees that the establishment of an Integrated Transport Planning Authority with responsibility for network-wide integrated transport planning and for the prioritisation and direction of all transport infrastructure expenditure is required.

Recommendation 8

That the NSW Government establish an Integrated Transport Planning Authority with the responsibility for network wide integrated transport planning and for the prioritisation and direction of all transport infrastructure expenditure.

²⁶¹ Mr Dobinson, Evidence, 7 November 2008, pp 39-40

A new long-term integrated transport strategic plan

- 4.135** In the previous section the Committee recommended that an Integrated Transport Planning Authority be established. The Committee envisages that the primary aim of that Authority would be to oversee and implement an integrated transport system that best services the transport needs of Sydney in the short and long term. Such a system would need to have the built-in capacity to evolve as demand changes and to account for planned metropolitan growth and development.
- 4.136** To do this effectively, the recommended Authority would need to work towards, and be guided by, a long-term integrated transport strategic plan. There should be an overall plan for Sydney that encompasses the long-term strategies for the various regional sectors. Within the overall strategic vision, the plan would need to adapt to changing economic and technological circumstances.
- 4.137** Many Inquiry participants argued the need for such planning to occur, and in doing so, expressed the view that current transport and land use planning does not appear to have the required integrated strategic focus.
- 4.138** Mr Petersen said that the culture of car dependency in the North West can be broken if new transport alternatives are provided, existing transport modes are better integrated and efficient land use strategies are employed. He said that the speed of growth in the North West necessitates that the Government must commence planning the integrated network of the future now.²⁶²
- 4.139** Similarly, Mr Sam Cappelli, Manager, Environment, City of Ryde asserted that further growth in the City of Ryde and the region can be supported only if a comprehensive approach is taken to integrated transport and land use to enable a move away from the current high reliance on the use of motor vehicles.²⁶³
- 4.140** Mr Morrison told the Committee that in addition to the Metropolitan Strategy and the State Infrastructure Strategy (SIS), there was a need for a long-term transport strategy, so that organisations such as his could identify the long-term transport priorities for Sydney. At present it appeared to him that it was a project-by-project rather than a long-term strategic approach:

...when it comes to long-term land use changes and long-term planning, we are talking about long-term rail links, there is a timing horizon which is often at the edge or over that 10-year horizon. It would make sense if we had not only a metro strategy and the aligned regional strategies for growth areas of the State, a 10-year infrastructure strategy, which is stapled to the budget process, but also a long-term transport strategy so we could see where the priorities are for a place such as Sydney. We do not have that. We have a number of individual projects around the city, but not a long-term plan that that investment and project design seem to be working towards. It is a project-by-project approach rather than a long-term strategy approach.²⁶⁴

²⁶² Mr Petersen, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 20

²⁶³ Mr Sam Cappelli, Manager, Environment, City of Ryde, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 5

²⁶⁴ Mr Morrison, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 42

- 4.141** Mr Morison went on to say that the development of such a plan would be an opportunity for broad consultation and input from all stakeholders regarding long-term transport needs. He said that this opportunity has been missing in the past.²⁶⁵
- 4.142** Mr Duncan advised the Committee that both New South Wales' infrastructure and transport plans were similar to those of other States. He noted that transport infrastructure was delivered against the State Infrastructure Strategy, which is updated on a two-yearly basis.²⁶⁶
- 4.143** The Director General of the Ministry of Transport said that transport planning is undertaken with a 25-year forward horizon:
- Typically there is a 25-year horizon, which you work backwards from, and there is a shorter term today horizon that you work forward from and you look at those overlaps and interfaces within the five- to 10-year-time period to make sure that what you are doing today and what you are proposing to do are aligned with your longer-term strategic view.²⁶⁷
- 4.144** While accepting the comments of the Director General, the Committee notes that there appeared to be minimal, or indeed no, awareness among Inquiry participants of what the long-term strategic view entailed.
- 4.145** Mr Dobinson described to the Committee what a true integrated public transport system means to him – a system that incorporates all modes of transport, as required, to achieve services that run at 10-minute frequencies, 16 hours a day:
- ... a transport system incorporates walkways, cycleways and, dare I say it, roads, and a genuine public transport system would incorporate buses, light rail and trains. They all fit into part of the north-west sector planning. A public transport system that I believe is a true public transport system, not a joke, is one that runs at 10-minute frequency 16 hours a day, not just in the peak hours with a half-hour or hourly service. That is a joke. That is not an alternative. I am still going to travel in my car if that is what you are going to deliver. You have to get a genuine alternative. If you cannot afford to operate a system like that, and you have talked about money, or you cannot afford to pay for a system that operates at 10-minute frequency 16 hours a day, you have got the wrong solution. Look at alternatives.²⁶⁸
- 4.146** Mr Dobinson recommended that the task of developing of an integrated transport plan, for the North West region in the first instance, should be given to an independent group of experts. He argued that such a group should develop a plan and take it through to the detail stage and then hand it back to the transport agencies to implement. He ventured that “the authorities are pretty good at doing things – they are just not good at planning.”²⁶⁹

²⁶⁵ Mr Morrison, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 42

²⁶⁶ Mr Duncan, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 3

²⁶⁷ Mr Glasson, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 18

²⁶⁸ Mr Dobinson, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 36

²⁶⁹ Mr Dobinson, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 36

- 4.147** In elaborating his views on the panel of experts to develop an integrated transport plan, Mr Dobinson pointed out that the panel would not work in isolation from the government transport agencies and simply hand them a finalised plan for implementation:

I think it needs to be a very small group of people, as they did for the Olympics. Select a group of half a dozen people who really know what they are talking about in planning for transport. Then have an advisory panel to that, which will comprise the various government bodies involved so that you can draw on their knowledge and data, but independently review this with people who have been in this game for a long time and know what they are talking about. There are quite a lot of people in that field today.²⁷⁰

- 4.148** Mr Johnson said that NSROC had commissioned a number of studies on what is required to accommodate intra-regional travel, as opposed to focusing solely on city-oriented commuting travel:

We have commissioned a number of studies that bring out that very issue. In fact, we had Gary Glazebrook speak to our NSROC annual conference this year very eloquently on that very topic. The issue that all of the councils considered to be very important is to build essentially what Mr Glazebrook describes as a spiderweb or lattice work of transport options, which are intraregional as well as directly into the city. Not all transport is predicated on commute to work or commute to work within the central business district. That seems to be the State Government's current focus.²⁷¹

- 4.149** As mentioned previously, Mr Chris Stapleton discussed his Sydney Integrated Transport Strategy (SITS) with the Committee. The SITS proposes what is required and can be achieved in the short, medium and long-term. The Committee has recommended that the Government give consideration to his discrete proposal for a bus network for the North West. His overall plan could provide a useful basis for discussion on the development of a long-term strategic plan for Sydney.

Committee comment

- 4.150** From the evidence received, it is clear to the Committee that stakeholders are not aware of what is the Government's long-term strategic plan for transport in Sydney. In fact, most Inquiry participants believe that the Government does not have a long-term plan for an integrated transport system.
- 4.151** The Committee is also clear about the need for a strategic transport plan for Sydney, and supports an independent body of experts developing the plan. While supporting the need for a plan, the Committee is concerned that the Government commit to its implementation. The Committee is therefore recommending that a panel of transport experts to develop a draft long-term integrated transport strategic plan for the Sydney region, for the Integrated Transport Planning Authority that the Committee recommended be established. The Authority will then be tasked with implementing the plan.

²⁷⁰ Mr Dobinson, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 38

²⁷¹ Mr Johnson, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 10

Recommendation 9

That the NSW Government establish a panel of transport experts to develop a draft long-term integrated transport strategic plan for the Sydney region, for the Integrated Transport Planning Authority that the Committee has recommended be established. As a first step, the NSW Government establish an independent body, the North West Region Transport Board, to develop an integrated, sustainable transport plan for the North West Sector, that could act as a model for other regions of New South Wales.

Transport needs analysis of North West Sector

- 4.152** It is perhaps axiomatic to state that the provision of, and investment in, transport services should reflect and meet transport needs; similarly a strategic transport plan should aim to provide services that meet current and future transport needs. However, throughout the Inquiry a number of participants noted their belief that the Government was focused on providing transport services that were Sydney CBD-oriented, despite evidence suggesting it is not the greatest need.
- 4.153** For example, Mr Dobinson described the hierarchy of travel movements for people from the North West Sector. Travel movements from the North West to the CBD comprise only 3 per cent of these movements. The primary travel movement is within the Sector. The second most frequent trip is from the North West to Parramatta.
- 4.154** On this basis, Mr Dobinson argued that the focus of the provision of transport services should be to meet the greatest need.²⁷² On the basis of this analysis the submission from 10,000 Greater Friends argued that there is a need for a high-speed, high capacity public transport link between the North West Sector and Parramatta as a first priority – initially a bus link and ultimately a light rail or Metro train.²⁷³
- 4.155** Similarly, and based on the same demand justification, Mr Chris Stapleton argued that there is a need for a metro from Castle Hill to Parramatta. He noted that four times more people go from the Baulkham Hills area to Parramatta than go to the city, and that they go right through the day.²⁷⁴
- 4.156** Mr Dobinson reiterated a recommendation contained in the submission from 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney²⁷⁵ that there be an undertaking of a comprehensive demand analysis of the needs of the North West Sector now and for the next 25 years which is then related to the land use planning for the area. Mr Dobinson asserted that the Government is currently not analysing demand in this manner. Mr Dobinson also questioned the priority that should be given to a rail link from the North West to the CBD.²⁷⁶

²⁷² Mr Dobinson, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 36

²⁷³ Submission 59, p 5

²⁷⁴ Mr Stapleton, Evidence, 10 November 2008, p 22

²⁷⁵ Submission 59, p 3

²⁷⁶ Mr Dobinson, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 36

- 4.157** On the basis of Mr Dobinson's assertion and other comments in submissions on transport movements, the Committee sought advice from the Ministry of Transport on their understanding on the primary transport movements for residents of the North West Sector.²⁷⁷ The Transport Data Centre of the Ministry of Transport subsequently provided the following data from the 2006 Household Travel Survey results and the 2006 Journey to Work data set which is derived from the Census:

Just over 1 million transport movements begin in Sydney's North West (Baulkham Hills and Hornsby Statistical Local Areas) on an average weekday. Of these:

- 70 per cent are for travel within the North West sector
- 30,000 (or 3 per cent) trips from the North West are to the Sydney CBD
- almost 70,000 trips are to Parramatta
- 45,000 trips are to Blacktown
- 30,000 trips are destined for each of Ryde and Ku-ring-gai.

For commuting travel to work, there are approximately 160,000 trips originating in the North West. Of these:

- 54,000 are within the North West
- 20,000 are to the Sydney CBD
- 13,000 are to Parramatta
- 8,000 are to Blacktown.

Car is the dominant form of travel from the North West, representing 81 per cent of trips. Public transport accounts for approximately 6 per cent of general travel and 17 per cent of commuter travel.²⁷⁸

- 4.158** The Committee notes that the advice provided by the Transport Data Centre generally accords with that provided by other Inquiry participants. It would appear that there is a strong demand justification for an improved public transport service link between Castle Hill/Baulkham Hills and Parramatta.

Committee comment

- 4.159** The Committee notes the arguments that there should be less focus on transport links between the North West and the Sydney CBD. However, there is still an obvious unmet demand for those services, which requires their enhancement. With respect to express bus services from the North West to the CBD, if people cannot access those services the only alternative is to drive that long distance, which significantly adds to congestion, cost and greenhouse gas emissions.

²⁷⁷ The Hon Jenny Gardiner MLC, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 24

²⁷⁸ Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence, 19 November 2008, Mr Duncan, p 9

- 4.160** The Committee also notes that many people who argue the need for a north west rail link as a priority, point out that such a link would also provide a means for people to travel to the North West. The rail link would provide a transport spine that would be an important element of any integrated system in the future.

Peak oil

- 4.161** The issue of peak oil – the reduction in production of oil leading to decreased availability and increased cost – is a factor of increasing relevance with respect to forward transport planning. The issue was raised with Inquiry participants throughout the public hearings.
- 4.162** For Dr Laird, like many others, the issue of peak oil is “not a matter of if but when”. He sees increased investment in rail infrastructure as an obvious response:

For the movement of freight, for example, trucks use three times the amount of diesel that locomotives use to move one tonne of freight from Sydney to Melbourne. Rail will save the use of fuel. For moving people, on average the ratio is about two to one in favour of rail. When it comes to comparing peak-hour traffic, a single occupant car driver will use five times the energy to move himself or herself than that same person sitting or standing in a crowded train. Rail has very significant energy advantages. Rail can use electricity, which can be generated either by coal, by hydroelectricity or other sources.²⁷⁹

- 4.163** Mr David Bell, Sydney Convenor, Australian Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas (ASPO- Australia) appeared before the Committee on 7 November 2008.²⁸⁰ Mr Bell said that his primary purpose in wishing to appear before the Committee was to make the point that more investment in public transport is required and that true integrated planning for the future will need to incorporate awareness of oil vulnerability:

I was more wanting to raise the fact of energy availability in relation to any proposal going forward. No matter what side of politics we are on, it really does not matter, because if we do not have oil we are all in the same boat. I wanted to say they have to take into account—any government, whether it is this Government, the next government, future governments, because they will have to deal with this problem going forward—we need to start to put oil vulnerability studies in the planning process. It is something we have never thought of before.²⁸¹

- 4.164** Mr Bell drew the Committee’s attention to the Queensland Government which had created an oil vulnerability task force to look at the impact of the declining availability of oil on the Queensland economy.²⁸²

²⁷⁹ Dr Laird, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 4

²⁸⁰ Mr David Bell, Sydney Convenor, Australian Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas, Evidence, 7 November 2008, pp 41-46

²⁸¹ Mr Bell, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 43

²⁸² Mr Bell, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 41

- 4.165** Mr Dobinson, like others, suggested that there were future technological solutions in transport to the oil energy problem and the emissions problem. While he believed that high travel by car will always be a factor in Sydney, it was still imperative to reduce that percentage.²⁸³
- 4.166** The Director General of the Ministry of Transport said that the issue of oil prices, and climate change, are part of the discussions regarding Sydney and its future. Mr Glasson said that forward planning has taken into account the potential for a greater shift to public transport patronage due to rising oil prices:

The issues of both climate change and energy prices are clearly part of the discussion that is ongoing now around Sydney and its future. I think the matter right now is that we do not yet understand in fine detail what the ultimate effect of some of those things will be, but certainly we understand that over time that could well indicate a shift to greater use of public transport and that is something that we have taken into account in our forward views. One thing that is always difficult—and we have had increases in public transport usage in the past couple of years—is that we do not know, for example, what the impact right now of this global financial crisis will be. We do not always know whether some of these are step changes in usage or whether they are simply changes that ultimately will fit into a longer range average.²⁸⁴

Committee comment

- 4.167** The process of this Inquiry has clearly shown that there is a need for substantially more investment in public transport infrastructure in the North West, if that Sector's dependence upon motor vehicle travel is ever to be broken. The issue of peak oil adds to the imperative for the provision of more public transport in the North West.

²⁸³ Mr Dobinson, Evidence, 7 November 2008, p 39

²⁸⁴ Mr Glasson, Evidence, 19 November 2008, p 10

Appendix 1 Submissions

No	Author
1	Mrs Annmaree Fowler
2	Mrs L. Beaumont
3	Mr Robert Milligan
4	Mr Graham Cunningham
5	Mr Ned Kulasin
6	Mr Peter Innes
7	Mrs Lesley Musgrave
8	Mr Adam Reid
9	Mr Mark Hornshaw
10	Mr Erwin Tischler
11	Mr John Aquilina (The Limousine Line/J.A.'s Hire Car Service)
12	Mr Victor Taffa (Independent candidate for Ryde)
13	Mr David Gray (Parramatta City Council)
14	Mr Peter LeMarquand
15	Mr Denis L. Swift
16	Mr Michael Hauswirth
17	Mr Sheng Lin
18	Mr Michael Belfield
18a	Mr Michael Belfield
18b	Mr Michael Belfield
19	Name suppressed
20	Mr David Wallace
21	Mr Ewan McLean
22	Ms Harpreet Suri
23	Mrs Eva Brundell
24	Name suppressed
25	Mr Bradley Dersch
26	Name suppressed
27	Mrs May Cheung
28	Mr Grant Eckett
29	Ms Yu Liu
30	Mr John Cheung

No	Author
31	Mr Jim Miles
32	Miss Haydee Muir
33	Ms Julie Kersake
33a	Ms Julie Kersake
34	Mr Christopher Walsh
35	Mr Harry Hoger
36	Mr Rex Broadbent
37	Mr Raymond Pulis
38	Mr David Bell (Australian Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas)
39	Dr Timothy Surendonk
40	Mr Maximo Buch
41	Mrs Shiralyn Bidner
42	Mr Edward Johnston
43	Mrs Therese Cheung
44	Ms Juliana Long
45	Ms Wendy Baxter
46	Mrs Tamara Scicluna
47	Mr Andrew Dumas
48	Mr Peter Egan
48a	Mr Peter Egan
48b	Mr Peter Egan
49	Mr Rafiqul Islam
50	Mr Ziggy Sempf
51	Mrs Sandra Cuming
52	Mr Jason Nealon
53	Mr Henry Tadevosian
53a	Mr Henry Tadevosian
54	Ms Jessica Saefudin
55	Mr Bob Kershaw (Exemplar Consulting Pty Ltd)
56	Mr John Murphy (Norwest Debtor Management)
57	Mrs Wendy Bowring
58	Mrs Leisl Kimber
59	Mr Desmond Dent (10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney)
60	Mr Robert Turner
61	Mr Keith Bensley

No	Author
62	Name suppressed
63	Name suppressed
64	Mrs Jodie Dabelic
65	Mr Maurice Brown
66	Mr John Gerdtz JP (Kellyville Ridge Community Association Incorporated)
67	Mrs Hazel Toomey
68	Mr Timothy Devin
69	Mr Patrick do Rozario (Paramard Investments Pty Ltd)
70	Mrs Margaret Dean
71	Ms Reyma Du
72	Mr John Li
73	Ms Heather Sheiles
74	Ms Janet Morris
75	Ms Margaret Shields
76	Mr Patrick do Rozario
77	Ms Burnette Mitchell
78	Mr Bernard and Ms Maureen McGroory
79	Ms Inger Jacob
80	Ms Alison Peters (Council of Social Service of NSW (NCOSS))
81	Dr Philip Laird
81a	Dr Philip Laird
82	Ms Monique Cowper (Hills Shire Times)
83	Ms Debbie Frankenberg
84	Mrs Debbie Edinburg (Eden Institute of Plastic and Cosmetic Surgery)
85	Ms Vanessa Rae
86	Mrs Maria Gonzales
87	Name suppressed
88	Mrs Juliet Loughnan
89	Mr Chris Stapleton (Stapleton Transportation and Planning Pty Ltd)
90	Mr Alan Evans (NRMA Motoring and Services)
91	Miss Claire Thompson
92	Ms Slavica Sarafimovska
93	Miss Ursula Crystal Anderson
94	Mrs Bev Jordan
95	Mrs Frances Hughes (Elders Castle Hill)

No	Author
96	Name suppressed
97	Mr David Bunt
98	Mrs Sue Finnie
99	Mr Kevin Gray
100	Mrs Kerry Wallace
101	Mr Michael Richardson MP
102	Mrs Julie Little
103	Mr David Catt (Rouse Hill Times)
104	Ms Caryn Bosco
105	Mr Kevin Eadie (Action for Public Transport NSW Inc.)
106	Mrs Catherine Lai
107	Ms Marcia Horvai (Pennant Hills District Civic Trust Inc.)
108	Ms Sarah Green
109	Mr James Doyle
110	Mrs Eva Bishop (Life4eva)
111	Mrs Michelle St. Heaps
112	Mr James Fields
113	Ms Claudia Graham
114	Name suppressed
115	Ms Sue Pearce (Hills Schools Industry Partnership)
116	Mrs Laura Jilka
117	Mr Benjamin Kelly
117a	Mr Benjamin Kelly
118	Mr Thomas Walder
119	Mrs Angela Strelow
120	Mrs Elvira De Neeff
121	Name suppressed
122	Mr Gareth Guest
123	Mr Sankara Sreekumar and Ms Sindhu Sukumar (ASIC)
124	Ms Lynette Gorrie
125	Mr Andrew Glass (Busways Group Pty Ltd)
126	Mr Tim Kelly
127	Mr Kiran Shah
128	Ms Christine Robinson
129	Mr Matt Mushalik

No	Author
129a	Mr Matt Mushalik
130	Mr Alex Portnoy
131	Mr Peter Jackson (Hawkesbury Shire Council)
132	Mr Robert Ball (Hornsby Shire Council)
133	Mr Andrew Bland (Ryde Business Forum Inc.)
134	Mr Steven Kim
135	Mr Ray Williams MP
136	Mr Stuart Mendel (Lend Lease/GPT (Rouse Hill) Pty Ltd)
137	Mr Colin Dawson
138	Name suppressed
139	Mrs Catherine Metcalfe
140	Mr Kary Petersen (Tourism and Transport Forum)
141	Mr Wayne Merton MP
142	Mr Michael Watt (Norwest Land)
143	Mr Paul Falzon (Western Sydney Community Forum)
144	Ms Robin Baird (Sydney Hills Business Chamber)
145	Mr Mark Kirkland (The GPT Group)
146	Mr Shayne Dumbrell
147	Ms Laura Baird
148	Mr Edward Wellington
149	Mr Peter Duncan (NSW Government – Department of Premier and Cabinet)
149a	NSW Government – Ministry of Transport
150	Mr Graham Hoskin
151	Mr Simon Pallavicini and Ms Deb Stewart
152	Clr Geina McCaffery (North Sydney Council)
153	Mrs Patricia Wagstaff
154	Mr John Leckie (Dural and Round Corner Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc.)
155	Mr Dave Walker (Baulkham Hills Shire Council)
155a	Clr Larry Bolitho (Baulkham Hills Shire Council)
156	Mr Ian Henderson
157	Ms Sandra Carter (Round Corner Village Residents' Association)
158	Mr John Longton
159	Mr Peter Waite OAM
160	Mr Peter Kerr
161	Ms Audrey Currie

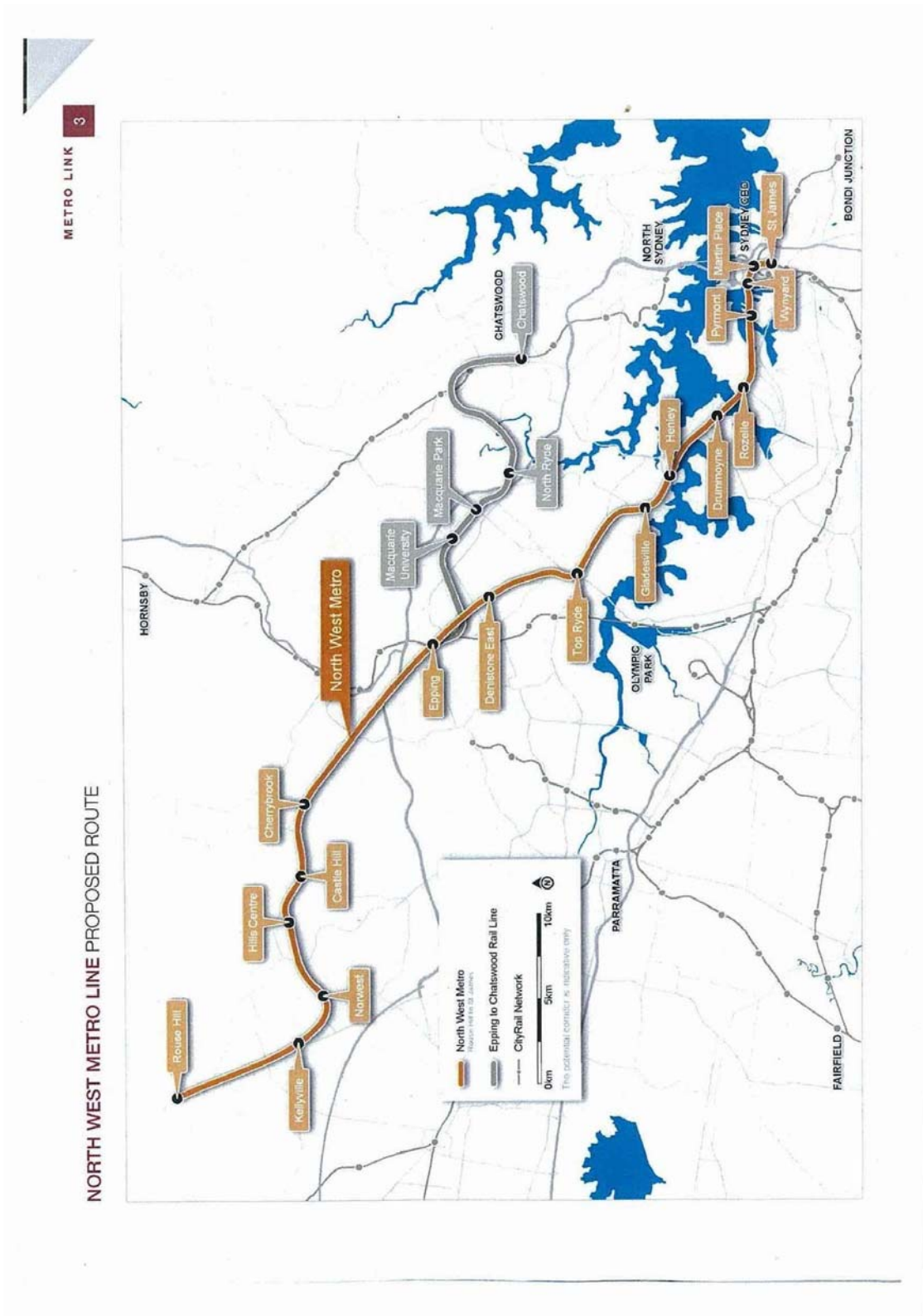
No	Author
162	Mr Ron Wright (TAFE NSW – Western Sydney Institute)
163	Mr Ken Morrison (Property Council of Australia)
164	Name suppressed
165	Ms Sally Williams
166	Mr Paul Turner
167	Ms Jennifer Farrer
168	Mr Peter Stuart
169	Name suppressed
170	Name suppressed
171	Mrs Nicole Tilbrook
172	Mr Michael Cuming
173	Mr Chris Cunliffe-Jones
174	Ms Margaret Whalen (West Pennant Hills Valley Progress Association Inc.)
175	Mrs Susan George
176	Mr Dermot O’Sullivan (Annagrove Progress Association)
177	Ms Margaret Whalen
178	Ms Beverly Garrard
179	Mr Aaron Gadiel (Urban Taskforce Australia)
180	Ms Gayle Kleinhans
181	Mr Alex Gooding (Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd)
182	Ms Sue Weatherley (City of Ryde)
183	Mr Dominic Johnson (Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC))
184	Mr Geoff Dawson
185	Mr Ian McKnight (Wyeth Australian Pty Limited)

Appendix 2 Witnesses

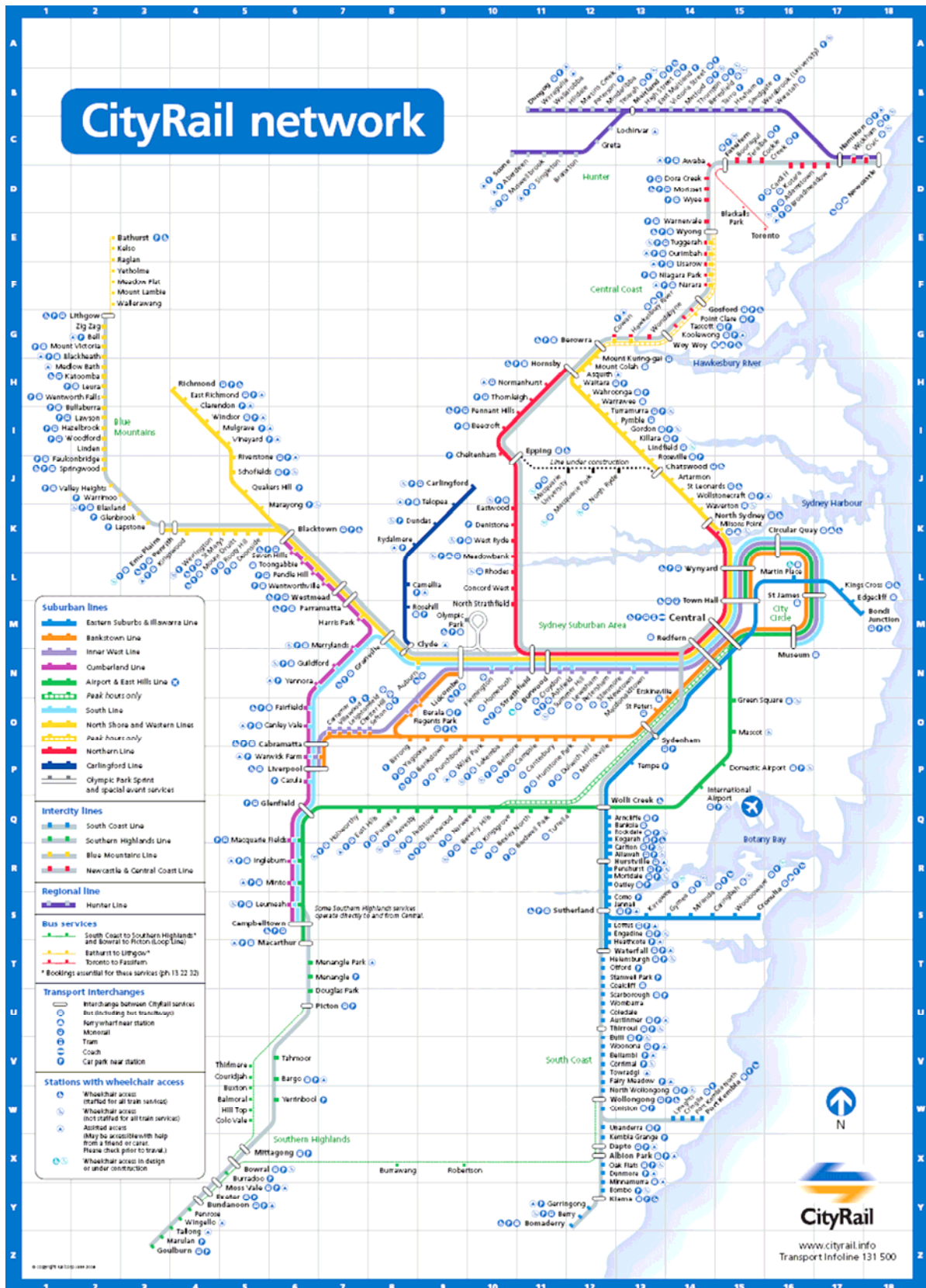
Date	Name	Position and Organisation
Friday 7 November 2008	Dr Philip Laird	School of Mathematics and Applied Statistics, University of Wollongong
Room 814-815, Parliament House	Mr Alex Gooding	Executive Director, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd
	Clr Larry Bolitho	Mayor, Baulkham Hills Shire Council
	Mr Andrew King	Manager, Traffic, Baulkham Hills Shire Council
	Clr Bart Bassett	Mayor, Hawkesbury City Council
	Mr Peter Jackson	General Manager, Hawkesbury City Council
	Mr Kary Petersen	Transport Manager, Tourism and Transport Forum
	Mr Rowan Barker	Manager, Media and Communications, Tourism and Transport Forum
	Mr Michael Richardson MP	Member for Castle Hill
	Mr Ray Williams MP	Member for Hawkesbury
	Mr Wayne Merton MP	Member for Baulkham Hills
	Mr Ken Dobinson	Director, 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney
	Mr David Bell	Sydney Convenor, Australian Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas
	Monday 10 November 2008	Mr Dominic Johnson
Room 814-815, Parliament House	Clr Genia McCaffery	Mayor, North Sydney Council
	Mr Lawrence Nagy	Manager, Traffic and Road Safety, Hornsby Shire Council
	Mr Sam Cappelli	Manager, the Environment, City of Ryde
	Mr Dermot O'Sullivan	President, Annangrove Progress Association
	Ms Margaret Whalen	Traffic representative, West Pennant Hills Valley Progress Association Inc.
	Ms Sandra Carter	President, Round Corner Village Residents' Association
	Mr Chris Stapleton	Stapleton Transportation and Planning Pty Ltd
	Mr John Leckie	Traffic Spokesman, Dural and Round Corner Chamber of Commerce
	Mr Tony Moran	President, Sydney Hills Business Chamber
	Mr Charles Kilby	Chair of Traffic, Transport and Infrastructure, Ryde Business Forum
	Mr Ken Morrison	NSW Executive Director, Property Council of Australia

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
	Mr Aaron Gadiel	Chief Executive Officer, Urban Taskforce Australia
	Mr Michael Watt	Development and Planning Manager, Norwest Land
	Mr Andrew Glass	Group Service Development Manager, Busways Group Pty Ltd
	Mr Darryl Mellish	Executive Director, NSW Bus and Coach Association
Wednesday 19 November 2008	Mr Peter Duncan	Acting Deputy Director General, Department of Premier and Cabinet
Room 814-815, Parliament House	Mr Jim Glasson	Director General, NSW Ministry of Transport
	Mr Marcus Ray	Acting Executive Director, Metropolitan Planning, NSW Department of Planning
	Mr Angus Dawson	Chief Executive Officer, Growth Centres Commission
	Mr Michael Schur	Deputy Secretary, Office of Infrastructure Management, NSW Treasury
	Mr Les Wielinga	Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority

Appendix 3 North West Metro Line proposed route



Appendix 4 CityRail network map



Appendix 5 Road proposals from Inquiry participants

Proposal	Submission No. (or doc) and page	Organisation
<p>Road Linking the M2 and M7 to the F3. F3 Sydney Orbital connections.</p>	<p>Tabled document, p 2</p> <p>Submission 4 p 1 Submission 135, p 2 Submission 155, p 9 Submission 59, p 7 Submission 66, p 7 Submission 157, p 5 Submission 174, p 2</p> <p>Submission 90, p 4 Submission 140, p 12 Submission 142, p 2 Submission 154, p 1</p> <p>Submission 138, p 1 Submission 167, p 5 Submission 177, p 2</p>	<p>Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd (WSROC)</p> <p>Member for Hawkesbury Baulkham Hills Council FROGS Kellyville Ridge Community Association Inc. Round Corner Village Residents' Association West Pennant Hills Valley Progress Association Inc. (WPHVPA) NRMA Tourism and Transport Forum Norwest Land Dural and Round Corner Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc. (DRCCCI)</p>
<p>Road West-facing ramps on the M2 at Windsor Road</p>	<p>Tabled document, p 2 Submission 141, p 7 Submission 155, p 9 Submission 157, p 5 Submission 179, p 2 Submission 58, p 2 Submission 171, p 1 Submission 177, p 2</p>	<p>WSROC Member for Baulkham Hills Baulkham Hills Council Round Corner Village Residents' Association Urban Taskforce Australia</p>
<p>Road Unbroken express bus lane created along the M2 and into the city.</p>	<p>Submission 25, p 1 Submission 58, p 1 Submission 111, p 1 Submission 116, p 1 Submission 151, p 2 Submission 167, p 3</p>	

The transport needs of Sydney's North-West sector

Proposal	Submission No. (or doc) and page	Organisation
	Submission 170, p 1 Submission 171, p 1	
Road Feasibility of constructing direct access from the North West T-way to M2 motorway.	Submission 141, p 4	Member for Baulkham Hills
Road Widening M2 westbound carriageway from two lanes to three lanes between Beecroft Road and Pennant Hills Road.	Submission 179, p 2	Urban Taskforce Australia
Road Widen the M2 to three lanes plus a bus lane each way.	Submission 142, p 4 Submission 151, p 3	Norwest Land
Road Underground road link between the F3 terminus at Wahroonga and the M2 at North Rocks by constructing a tunnel under Pennant Hills Road dedicated road reserve.	Submission 69, p 7	Paramard Investments Pty Ltd
Road New East-facing on and off ramps on the M2 at Herring Road.	Submission 179, p 2	Urban Taskforce Australia
Road Upgrade and widening of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burns Road and Memorial Avenue linking Windsor and Old Windsor Roads at Kellyville • Showground Road from Old Northern Road to Carrington Road at Castle Hill 	Submission 155, p 10 Submission 157, p 5 Submission 176, p 2 Submission 89, p 1 Submission 90, p 8 Submission 140, p 12 Submission 144, p 2 Submission 145, p 2 Submission 179, p 2 Submission 25, p 1 Submission 28, p 1 Submission 47, p 1 Submission 58, p 1 Submission 65, p 2 Submission 95, p 1 Submission 100, p 1 Submission 151, p 3 Submission 167, p 5 Submission 171, p 1	Baulkham Hills Council Round Corner Village Residents' Association Annagrove Progress Association Chris Stapleton NRMA Tourism and Transport Forum Sydney Hills Business Chamber The GPT Group Urban Taskforce Australia
Road Upgrade of:	Submission 135, p 2 Submission 155, p 12 Submission 157, p 4	Member for Hawkesbury Baulkham Hills Council Round Corner Village Residents' Association

Proposal	Submission No. (or doc) and page	Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major intersections along Seven Hills Road and Old Northern Road. • The intersection Glenhaven Road and Old Northern Road as well as a provision for lights • Provision for lights at the intersections of Hastings and Old Northern Road • Provision for lights at the intersections of Kenthurst and Old Northern Road. 	Submission 144, p 3 Submission 154, p 1 Submission 47, p 1	Sydney Hills Business Chamber DRCCCI
Road Better coordination of traffic lights at Old Windsor Rd and Pennant Hills Road.	Submission 156, p 1	
Road Conduct an underpass at the intersection of Windsor and Old Northern Roads	Submission 108, p 2	
Road Construct and underpass for Baulkham Hills Junction	Submission 141, p 10 Submission 155, p 11	Member for Baulkham Hills Baulkham Hills Council
Road Upgrade and add additional lanes on Blacktown/Richmond Roads.	Submission 131, p 3 Submission 140, p 12	Hawkesbury Shire Council Tourism and Transport Forum
Road Continue M7 north from Dean Park as the alternative to duplicating Pennant Hills Road.	Submission 66, p 4	Kellyville Ridge Community Association Inc.
Road A more direct route taking traffic from the M7 at Dean Park near Blacktown to the F3 at Kariiong near Gosford.	Submission 107, p 6	Pennant Hills District Civic Trust Inc.
Road Provision of a roundabout at the intersection of Galston Road and Old Northern Road at Dural.	Submission 157, p 5	Round Corner Village Residents' Association
Road A second crossing over the Hawkesbury River.	Submission 157, p 5	Round Corner Village Residents' Association
Road Upgrade T-way Express to City from Castle Hill.	Submission 89, p 1	Chris Stapleton
Road T-way from Castle Hill to Rouse Hill via Norwest.	Submission 89, p 1	Chris Stapleton
Road Complete Castle Hill bypass.	Submission 89, p 1	Chris Stapleton
Road Widen single lane exit from Castle Hill Road tunnel under Pennant Hills Road to two lanes.	Submission 138, p 1	
Road Link Parramatta and Westmead via the existing t-way to Castle Hill.	Submission 32, p 1	

The transport needs of Sydney's North-West sector

Proposal	Submission No. (or doc) and page	Organisation
Road Permit trucks on T-ways to reduce congestion, emissions and increase road safety	Submission 90, p 4	NRMA
Road More effective use and expansion of T2 and T3 Transit Lanes	Submission 90, p 10	NRMA
Road Eliminate all at-grade intersections on the Parramatta - Rouse Hill and Blacktown - Rouse Hill T-ways and introduce traffic signal pre-emption for inseparable intersections.	Submission 125, p 2 Submission 142, p 2	Busways Group Pty Ltd Norwest Land
Road Complete the M4 East (including a Port Botany tunnel).	Submission 163, p 3	Property Council of Australia
Road Traffic signals at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lexington Dr and Norwest Boulevard, synchronised to the lights on Old Windsor Road • Hillsong Church end of Solent Circuit • Brookhollow and Norwest Boulevard. 	Submission 185, p 9	Wyeth Australian Pty Ltd
Road Opening the access to both sides of Solent Circuit.	Submission 185, p 9	Wyeth Australian Pty Ltd
Road Make exclusive T-ways available to other public vehicle operators in a staged implementation as they are underutilised.	Submission 11, p 1	The Limousine Line/ J.A.'s Hire Car Service
Road Total exclusion zone for heavy vehicles on Cumberland Highway passing through Carlingford.	Submission 4, p 1	
Road Cut down nuisance tripping when a vehicle approaches a main road from a signaled side street.	Submission 156, p 2	
Road Collector Road and should have a carriageway width of 9.5 metres with a 3.5 metre council verge on each side.	Submission 161, p 8	
Road Install traffic management measures between Withers Road and Knox Place to control the speed of traffic on Milford Drive.	Submission 161, p 14	
Bus Give Hillsbus more buses and improve bus priority on the City Express route wherever possible.	Submission 101, p 6 Submission 135, p 2 Submission 141, p 9	Member for Castle Hill Member for Hawkesbury Member for Baulkham Hills

Proposal	Submission No. (or doc) and page	Organisation
Purchasing of buses for the Private Bus industry.	Submission 138, p 1 Submission 151, p 2	
Bus Allow Hillsbus to have 6 standby buses in reserve at Baulkham Hills Junction between 6am and 9am. Buses to be used as "head offs" when overcrowding occurs, or as a substitute service from Baulkham Hills Junction in the event of a late running service.	Submission 97, p 3	
Bus Open the breakdown lane on M2 for buses.	Submission 6, p 1 Submission 101, p 4	Member for Castle Hill
Bus High-speed bus links between Castle Hill and Parramatta and Castle Hill and the Sydney CBD. Castle Hill to Sydney CBD route: via Crane Road and Taylor Road to the M2 Motorway with a bus only bridge over Excelsior Creek.	Submission 59, p 5	FROGS
Bus Extend regular express Rouse Hill to City bus services along the T-way and M2 throughout the day and evening.	Submission 66, p 2 Submission 174, p 5	Kellyville Ridge Community Association Inc. WPHVPA
Bus More buses to use the M2 exit ramp to Epping station	Submission 137, p 1	
Bus New Route City Express to operate between Rouse Hill Town Centre and the City via T-Way and M2.	Submission 161, p 17	
Bus Extend the bus lane on the M2 from the Epping tunnel to the Lane Cove Tunnel in both directions.	Submission 37, p 1	
Bus Provision for a public transport corridor on the M7	Tabled document, p 2	WSROC
Bus Integrated bus routes from Rouse Hill, Kellyville and Beaumont Hills to Blacktown, Parramatta, Castle Hill and Sydney.	Submission 135, p 2 Submission 155, p 9 Submission 59, p 6 Submission 107, p 4	Member for Hawkesbury Baulkham Hills Council FROGS Pennant Hills District Civic Trust Inc.
Bus Complete the bus transitway from Parklea to Castle Hill	Tabled document, p 2 Submission 38, p 2	WSROC Australian Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas
Bus Complete the North-West Transitway from Blacktown to Castle Hill.	Submission 140, p 11	Tourism and Transport Forum
Bus	Submission 27, p 1	

The transport needs of Sydney's North-West sector

Proposal	Submission No. (or doc) and page	Organisation
A direct bus route to Castle Hill Town center or Castle Towers to Chapel Lane, Bella Vista Drive.		
Bus Improve bus links for residents of Carlingford and North Rocks to Castle Hill.	Submission 34, p 1	
Bus More bus lanes to allow buses freer access, especially on busy roads such as Pennant Hills Road and Carlingford Road.	Submission 34, p 1	
Bus A bus lane along Highs Road and Aiken Road in West Pennant Hills	Submission 164, p 4	
Bus The proposed bus link from Castlewood to West Pennant Hills Valley should be built as a 24 Hour Bus Corridor.	Submission 166, p 1	
Bus Provision of additional strategic bus corridors and cross-regional bus services	Tabled document, p 2	WSROC
Bus Network of buses passing close to most households every 10 minutes.	Submission 89, p 1 Submission 97, p 4	Chris Stapleton
Bus Build a dedicated bus roadway linking the T-way at Abbot Road with the existing median M2 bus lanes at Windsor Road.	Submission 125, p 2	Busways Group Pty Ltd
Bus Improve frequency of bus routes with funding to address target time periods.	Submission 125, p 3 Submission 142, p 2	Busways Group Pty Ltd Norwest Land
Bus Introduce a Bus Rapid Transit system along the Rouse Hill to Parramatta; Rouse Hill to Blacktown; and Rouse Hill to Epping corridors.	Submission 125, p 5	Busways Group Pty Ltd
Bus New route to operate between Rouse Hill Area and the Rouse Hill Town Centre, via Highlands Estate, Kellyville, operating along Greenhills Drive, Adelphi Street, Mile End Road, Milford Drive, withers Road, Bentley Avenue, Wellgate Avenue and Commercial Road.	Submission 161, p 17	
Bus Immediately allow private bus operators to utilise the dedicated bus T-Ways.	Submission 144, p 2	Sydney Hills Business Chamber
Bus Build bus lanes from Baulkham Hills to Parramatta	Submission 28, p 1	
Bus No bus should leave early unless the next one is less than 20 minutes away.	Submission 31, p 1	

Proposal	Submission No. (or doc) and page	Organisation
Bus Increase number and frequency of buses during school peak hour.	Submission 34, p 1	
Bus Revise school bus routes, as population has changed.	Submission 58, p 1	
Bus Buses route through Brampton Drive in Kellyville.	Submission 86, p 1	
Bus Move Sydney Buses from the Eastern Suburbs to North-West Sydney.	Submission 130, p 1	
Bus Detour some city-bound services through North Ryde and North Sydney.	Submission 137, p 1	
Bus Sydney Buses to use the Lane Cove Tunnel.	Submission 146, p 1	
Bus Increase the amount of buses on the 610 route.	Submission 74, p 1 Submission 88, p 1 Submission 116, p 1	
Bus Remove route 610 from Rouse Hill Area, commencing from Rouse Hill Town Centre interchange to the City via Beaumont Hills and Castle Hill.	Submission 161, p 17	
Bus There needs to be a route 612 Express Service to North Sydney.	Submission 108, p 4	
Bus Remove route 608 from Rouse Hill and re-route through Rouse Hill Town Centre interchange for service between Windsor and Castle Hill.	Submission 161, p 17	
Bus Route T66 to provide a peak hour direct service between Rouse Hill (Adelphi Street) and Parramatta via Mile End Rd, Milford Drive, Withers Road, Commercial Road and the Rouse Hill Town Centre Interchange, then by T-Way to Parramatta. This will replace route T64 in the Rouse Hill area.	Submission 161, p 17	
Bus Route 617X to be modified to provide a Peak Hour direct service between Rouse Hill (Adelphi Street) and the City via Mile End Rd, Milford Drive, Withers Road, Commercial Road and the Rouse Hill Town Centre Interchange, then by T-Way to M2 junction at Seven Hills to the City.	Submission 161, p 17	
Bus Remove route T75 from Aberdow Avenue, Mile End Road and Milford Drive and re-	Submission 161, p 17	

The transport needs of Sydney's North-West sector

Proposal	Submission No. (or doc) and page	Organisation
route along Mile End Road, Withers Road and Commercial Road through Rouse Hill Town Centre Interchange for service between Riverstone and Blacktown, with exception of school services.		
Bus Remove route 746 from Adelphi Street and re-route through Withers Road and Mile End Road, with the exception of school services.	Submission 161, p 17	
Bus Run buses on other routes at weekends and not just Routes 610 and 619.	Submission 167, p 2	
Bus Run T62 services that co-inside with some regular Hillsong Church events.	Submission 32, p 1	
Bus/walk Pedestrian crossings are needed near all bus stops on busy roads	Submission 31, p 1	
Bus/Bicycle Fit buses with bicycle racks to the front of the bus.	Submission 151, p 2	
Bicycle Create a bicycle lane off the main road where the nature strip is	Submission 6, p 1	
Bicycle Provide permanent cycle way facilities that bypass the Norfolk Road Tunnel.	Submission 179, p 2	Urban Taskforce Australia
Carpark Provide commuter carparking at major transport nodes	Tabled document, p 2 Submission 155, p 12 Submission 157, p 6 Submission 174, p 4 Submission 90, p 8 Submission 144, p 2 Submission 154, p 1 Submission 163, p 4 Submission 40, p 1 Submission 51, p 1 Submission 65, p 1 Submission 108, p 5 Submission 116, p 1 Submission 151, p 2 Submission 167, p 3	WSROC Baulkham Hills Council Round Corner Village Residents' Association WPHVPA NRMA Sydney Hills Business Chamber DRCCCI Property Council of Australia

Appendix 6 Minutes

Minutes No. 12

Friday 29 August 2008

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4

Parkes Room, Parliament House, Sydney at 1:30 pm

1. Members present

Miss Jenny Gardiner (*Chair*)

Ms Lynda Voltz

Ms Kayee Griffin

Mr David Clarke

Ms Sylvia Hale

Mr Henry Tsang

2. Apologies

Mr Roy Smith

3. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Clarke: That draft Minutes No. 11 be confirmed.

4. Correspondence

Received

Proposed inquiry into North-West Sydney Sector Transport

- 28 August 2008 – From Miss Gardiner, Ms Hale and Mr Clarke dated 28 August 2008 requesting a meeting of GPSC 4 to consider a proposed self reference into North-West Sydney Sector Transport.

5. Consideration of proposed self reference – North-West Sydney Sector Transport

The Chair tabled a letter to the Clerk of the Committee signed by Miss Gardiner, Ms Hale and Mr Clarke requesting a meeting of the Committee to consider proposed terms of reference into North-West Sydney Sector Transport.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Clarke: That the Committee adopt the following terms of reference:

That GPSC4 inquire into and report on the integrated transport needs of Sydney's North-West Sector and, in particular:

1. The requirements and plans for an integrated transport system in the North-West Sector, including road, rail and bus links,
2. The proposed funding of an integrated transport system for the North-West Sector, including the distribution of developer and State infrastructure levies,
3. The plans and funding for the North-West Metro and the NSW Government's decision not to proceed with the North-West Rail Link, and
4. Any other related matters.

Advertising

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Tsang: That the Inquiry and call for submissions be advertised at the earliest practicable date in the Sydney metropolitan and relevant local media.

Submission closing date

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Hale: That the closing date for submissions be Friday 17 October 2008.

Hearing/site visit

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Clarke: That the Committee hold public hearings and a possible site visit on Friday 7 and Monday 10 November 2008.

6. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 1:50 pm *sine die*.

Beverly Duffy
Clerk to the Committee

Minutes No. 19

Thursday 23 October 2008

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4

Members' Lounge, Parliament House, Sydney at 5.50 pm

1. Members present

Miss Jenny Gardiner (*Chair*)
Ms Lynda Voltz (*Deputy Chair*)
Mr David Clarke
Ms Kayee Griffin
Ms Lee Rhiannon (*Hale*)
Mr Roy Smith
Mr Henry Tsang

2. Substitute members

The Chair advised that she had received written advice from Ms Sylvia Hale that Ms Rhiannon would be substituting for Ms Hale for the duration of the Inquiry into the Transport Needs of Sydney's North West Sector.

3. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Smith: That draft Minutes Nos. 13 - 18 be confirmed.

4. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received

- 20 October 2008 – letter from the NSW Department of Planning enclosing multiple copies of the document entitled *North West Subregion Draft Subregional Strategy (December 2007)*
- 21 October 2008 – email from Ms Sylvia Hale MLC advising that Ms Lee Rhiannon MLC will substitute for her for the duration of the Inquiry into the Transport Needs of Sydney's North West Sector.

Sent

- 22 September 2008 – Letters from the Chair to the list of stakeholders, agreed to by the Committee at the meeting of 29 August 2008, inviting submissions to the Inquiry into the Transport Needs of Sydney's North West Sector.

5. Inquiry into the Transport Needs of Sydney's North West Sector**Publication of submissions**

Resolved on the motion of Mr Clarke: That according to section 4 of the Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975 and Standing Order 223(1), the Committee authorise the publication of submissions Nos: 19, 24, 26, 62, 63, 87, 96, 114, 121, 138, and 170 with the name suppressed at the request of the submission author.

The Clerk advised that it is Committee practice to suppress publication of the names of minors who participate in committee activities.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Smith: That according to section 4 of the Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975 and Standing Order 223(1), the Committee authorise the publication of submission No 164 with the name suppressed.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Clarke: That according to section 4 of the Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975 and Standing Order 223(1), the Committee authorise the publication of submissions Nos: 1-18, 20-23, 25, 27-61, 64-86, 88-95, 97-113, 115-120, 122-163, 165-169, and 171-181.

Invitations to appear as witnesses before the Committee

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Clarke: That the Committee invite the Office of the Co-ordinator General, Department of Premier and Cabinet to appear as a witness before the Committee, and request that the Office bring appropriate representatives from the following agencies:

- NSW Ministry of Transport
- NSW Department of Planning
- NSW Treasury
- Rail Corporation NSW
- State Transit Authority
- Roads and Traffic Authority.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Clarke: That one timeslot be set aside to hear evidence from the local members for the electorates of Castle Hill, Hawkesbury, and Baulkham Hills, and that the members for those electorates be invited to appear.

Resolved on the motion of Ms Voltz: That the Committee set aside two hearing timeslots to hear evidence from local councils; one timeslot for hearing evidence from the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils and a representative from member councils as appropriate; and the other timeslot for hearing evidence from the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils and a representative from member councils as appropriate.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin: That the Mayor of North Sydney Council be requested to appear in her capacity as mayor and also in her capacity as President of the Local Government Association.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Rhiannon: That the Committee extend an invitation to appear as witnesses before the Committee to:

- NRMA
- Busways Group
- Tourism and Transport Forum.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Voltz: That the Committee set aside one timeslot to hear evidence from local community representative groups who make submissions to the Inquiry and extend an invitation to those groups to appear as witnesses before the Committee.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Voltz: That the Committee set aside one timeslot to hear evidence from local business and commerce groups who make submissions to the inquiry and extend an invitation to those groups to appear as witnesses before the Committee.

Resolved on the motion of Mr Clarke: that the Committee extend an invitation to appear as witnesses before the Committee to:

- ASPO – Australian Association for the Study of Peak Oil & Gas
- FROGS – 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney
- Action for Public Transport.

Resolved, in the motion of Ms Volts: That the Committee set aside one timeslot to hear evidence from infrastructure/development groups and extend an invitation to those groups to appear as witnesses before the Committee:

- Lend Lease
- Norwest
- Urban Taskforce
- Property Council.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Clarke: That the Committee extend an invitation to appear as a witness before the Committee to:

- Mr Chris Stapleton
- Dr Phillip Laird
- Mr Jim Steer.

6. **Adjournment**

The Committee adjourned at 6:15 pm until Friday 7 November 2008.

Rachel Simpson
Clerk to the Committee

Minutes No. 20

Friday 7 November 2008

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4

Room 814/815, Parliament House, Sydney at 11.45 am

1. **Members present**

Miss Jenny Gardiner (*Chair*)
Ms Lynda Voltz (*Deputy Chair*)
Mr John Ajaka (*Clarke*) (to 1:00 pm)
Mr David Clarke (from 1:00 pm)
Ms Kayee Griffin
Ms Lee Rhiannon
Mr Roy Smith
Mr Henry Tsang

2. **Substitute members**

The Chair advised that she had received written advice from the Opposition Whip that Mr Ajaka would be substituting for Mr Clarke for the purposes of the meeting, until 1:00 pm.

3. **Previous minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Smith: That draft Minutes No. 19 be confirmed.

4. **Correspondence**

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received

- 31 October 2008 – Letter from Mr Dave Walker, General Manager, Baulkham Hills Shire Council to the Chair, regarding appearance of representative(s) from the Council at a public hearing of the Inquiry into Transport Needs of Sydney's North West Sector
- 6 November 2008 – Letter from Mr Peter Duncan, Deputy Director General, Department of Premier and Cabinet, in response to the Committee's invitation to representatives of various government agencies to appear as witnesses before the Committee on 7 November 2008.

Sent

- Various emails/letters from Committee secretariat to stakeholders, as identified by the Committee at its meeting on 23 October, enclosing an invitation to appear as a witness before the Committee for the purposes of the Inquiry into Transport Needs of Sydney's North West Sector
- 30 October 2008 – Letter from Chair to Mr Peter Duncan, Deputy Director General, Department of Premier and Cabinet, relaying resolution of the Committee to invite representatives from various government departments to appear as witnesses before the Committee on Friday 7 November 2008.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Ajaka: That according to section 4 of the Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975 and Standing Order 223(1), the Committee authorise the publication of Mr Duncan's letter dated 6 November 2008.

5. **Publication of submissions**

Resolved on the motion of Ms Rhiannon: That according to section 4 of the Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975 and Standing Order 223(1), the Committee authorise the publication of submissions Nos: 182-184, 48b and 149a.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Voltz, that the name of the author of submission No. 169 be suppressed, at the request of the author.

6. **Return of answers to questions taken on notice**

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Rhiannon: That the Committee request witnesses to return answers to questions taken on notice at the public hearing of 7 November 2008 by Wednesday 26 November 2008.

7. **Date for deliberative meeting to consider Chair's draft report**

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Voltz: That the Committee meets to consider the Chair's draft report on Monday 15 December, commencing at 10 am.

8. **Further committee hearings**

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Voltz: That the Committee consider whether to hold an additional hearing as part of the Inquiry into the transport needs of Sydney's North West sector after the public hearing on Monday 10 November 2008.

9. **Public hearing – Inquiry into transport needs of Sydney's North West sector**

The public and media were admitted. The Chair made a statement regarding procedural matters.

The following witness was sworn and examined:

- Dr Philip Laird, School of Mathematics and Applied Statistics, University of Wollongong.

Mr Laird tabled a document titled 'Getting more people on public transport' which is page 20 from *Action for transport 2010: an integrated transport plan for Sydney*.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Alex Gooding, Executive Director, WSROC Ltd
- Clr Larry Bolitho, Mayor, Baulkham Hills Shire Council
- Mr Andrew King, Manager, Traffic, Baulkham Hills Shire Council
- Clr Bart Bassett, Mayor, Hawkesbury City Council
- Mr Peter Jackson, General Manager, Hawkesbury City Council.

Clr Bolitho tabled his opening statement and a Baulkham Hills Shire media release from 31 October 2008 titled 'Baulkham Hills Council seeks \$290 million rescue package in place of doomed metro rail link'.

Mr Gooding tabled a WSROC media release from 3 November 2008 titled 'Short-sighted State Government decision condemns Western Sydney to gridlock'.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Kary Peterson, Transport Manager, Tourism and Transport Forum
- Mr Rowan Barker, Manager, Media and Communications, Tourism and Transport Forum.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were examined under their oaths as Members of Parliament:

- Mr Michael Richardson MP, Member for Castle Hill
- Mr Ray Williams MP, Member for Hawkesbury
- Mr Wayne Merton MP, Member for Baulkham Hills.

Mr Smith left the meeting at 3.20 pm.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

Ms Voltz left the meeting at 4.15 pm.

The following witness was sworn and examined:

- Mr Ken Dobinson, Director, 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witness was sworn and examined:

- Mr David Bell, Sydney Convenor, Australian Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas.

Mr Bell tabled the following documents:

- AFP article titled 'IEA sees 100-dollar oil, urges massive effort and change on energy'.

- Australian Senate Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee, 'Australia's future oil supply and alternative transport fuels', Public Hearing, 11 July 2006
- First report of the UK industry Taskforce on Peak Oil and Energy Security titled 'The oil crunch: securing the UK's energy future'
- Guardian newspaper article titled 'Energy agency denies oil output falling at faster rate than previously thought'
- Financial Times article titled 'World will struggle to meet oil demand'
- The Sacramento Bee, 'Voters approve high-speed rail bonds'
- The Chronicle article titled 'High-speed rail plan winning'
- Slides by the Australian Association for the Study of Peak Oil titled 'The Peak Oil and Climate Change Convergence'
- Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006 Census of population and housing, 'Method of travel to work (full classification list) by sex'
- US Joint Economic Committee, Faltering Growth and the Need for Economic Stimulus, Public Hearing, 30 October 2008
- CIBC World Markets article titled 'Just how big is Cleveland'
- CIBC World Markets article titled 'Heading for the exit lane'
- CIBC World Markets article titled 'The age of Scarcity'.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The media and the public withdrew.

10. Deliberative

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Tsang: That under section 4 of the *Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975* and under the authority of Standing Order 224, the Committee authorises the Clerk of the Committee to accept and publish the following documents tabled during the hearing:

- A document titled 'Getting more people on public transport' which is page 20 from *Action for transport 2010: an integrated transport plan for Sydney*, tabled by Dr Philip Laird
- Opening statement, tabled by Clr Larry Bolitho
- A Baulkham Hills Shire media release from 31 October 2008 titled 'Baulkham Hills Council seeks \$290 million rescue package in place of doomed metro rail link', tabled by Clr Larry Bolitho
- WSROC media release from 3 November 2008 titled 'Short-sighted State Government decision condemns Western Sydney to gridlock', tabled by Mr Alex Gooding
- AFP article titled 'IEA sees 100-dollar oil, urges massive effort and change on energy', tabled by Mr David Bell
- Australian Senate Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee, 'Australia's future oil supply and alternative transport fuels', Public Hearing, 11 July 2006, tabled by Mr David Bell
- First report of the UK industry Taskforce on Peak Oil and Energy Security titled 'The oil crunch: securing the UK's energy future', tabled by Mr David Bell
- Guardian newspaper article titled 'Energy agency denies oil output falling at faster rate than previously thought', tabled by Mr David Bell
- Financial Times article titled 'World will struggle to meet oil demand', tabled by Mr David Bell
- The Sacramento Bee, 'Voters approve high-speed rail bonds', tabled by Mr David Bell
- The Chronicle article titled 'High-speed rail plan winning', tabled by Mr David Bell
- Slides by the Australian Association for the Study of Peak Oil titled 'The Peak Oil and Climate Change Convergence', tabled by Mr David Bell

- Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006 Census of population and housing, 'Method of travel to work (full classification list) by sex', tabled by Mr David Bell
- US Joint Economic Committee, Faltering Growth and the Need for Economic Stimulus, Public Hearing, 30 October 2008, tabled by Mr David Bell
- CIBC World Markets article titled 'Just how big is Cleveland', tabled by Mr David Bell
- CIBC World Markets article titled 'Heading for the exit lane', tabled by Mr David Bell
- CIBC World Markets article titled 'The age of Scarcity', tabled by Mr David Bell.

11. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 5.15 pm until Monday 10 November 2008 (public hearing).

Rachel Simpson
Clerk to the Committee

Minutes No. 21

Monday 10 November 2008
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4
Room 814/815, Parliament House, Sydney at 9.15 am

1. Members present

Miss Jenny Gardiner (Chair)
Ms Lynda Voltz (Deputy Chair)
Mr David Clarke
Ms Sylvia Hale (Rhiannon)
Ms Kayee Griffin
Mr Roy Smith
Mr Henry Tsang

2. Substitute members

The Chair advised that she had received written advice that Ms Hale would be substituting for Ms Rhiannon for the purposes of the hearing.

3. Publication of submissions

Resolved on the motion of Ms Griffin: That according to section 4 of the Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975 and Standing Order 223(1), the Committee authorise the publication of submission No: 129a.

4. Return of answers to questions taken on notice

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Clarke: That the Committee request witnesses to return answers to questions taken on notice at the public hearing of 10 November 2008 by Friday 28 November 2008.

5. Further committee hearings

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin: That the Committee defer consideration of the question whether to hold an additional hearing as part of the Inquiry into the transport needs of Sydney's North West sector until the Committee meeting on Thursday 13 November 2008.

6. Public hearing – Inquiry into transport needs of Sydney's North West sector

The public and media were admitted. The Chair made a statement regarding procedural matters.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Dominic Johnson, Executive Director, Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils

- Clr Genia McCaffery, Mayor, North Sydney Council
- Mr Lawrence Nagy, Manager Traffic and Road Safety, Hornsby Shire Council
- Mr Sam Cappelli, Manager, the Environment, City of Ryde.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Dermot O’Sullivan, President, Annangrove Progress Association
- Ms Margaret Whalen, Traffic representative, West Pennant Hills Valley Progress Association Inc.
- Ms Sandra Carter, President, Round Corner Village Residents’ Association.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witness was sworn and examined:

- Mr Chris Stapleton, Stapleton Transportation and Planning Pty Ltd.

Mr Stapleton tabled a copy of his presentation entitled ‘Sydney Integrated Transport Strategy: Transport for the North-West’.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr John Leckie, Traffic Spokesman, Dural and Round Corner Chamber of Commerce
- Mr Tony Moran, President, Sydney Hills Business Chamber
- Mr Charles Kilby, Chair of Traffic, Transport and Infrastructure, Ryde Business Forum.

Mr Kilby tabled a map of Ryde and surrounding areas with current traffic bottlenecks and proposed park and ride locations highlighted.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Ken Morrison, NSW Executive Director, Property Council of Australia
- Mr Aaron Gadiel, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Taskforce Australia
- Mr Michael Watt, Development and Planning Manager, Norwest Land.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Andrew Glass, Group Service Development Manager, Busways Group Pty Ltd
- Mr Darryl Mellish, Executive Director, NSW Bus and Coach Association.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The media and the public withdrew.

7. Deliberative

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Voltz: That under section 4 of the *Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975* and under the authority of Standing Order 224, the Committee authorises the Clerk of the Committee to publish the following documents tabled during the hearing:

- copy of Chris Stapleton’s presentation entitled ‘Sydney Integrated Transport Strategy: transport for the North-West’

- map of Ryde and surrounding areas with current traffic bottlenecks and proposed park and ride locations highlighted.

8. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 4.08 pm until Thursday 13 November 2008.

Rachel Simpson
Clerk to the Committee

Minutes No. 22

Thursday 13 November 2008

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4

Members Lounge, Parliament House, Sydney at 1:00 pm

1. Members present

Miss Jenny Gardiner (*Chair*)
Ms Lynda Voltz (*Deputy Chair*)
Mr David Clarke
Ms Kayee Griffin
Ms Sylvia Hale
Mr Roy Smith
Mr Henry Tsang

2. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Smith: That draft Minutes Nos 20 and 21 be confirmed.

3. ***

4. Budget Estimates supplementary hearings

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Smith: That the Committee hold two hearings on Wednesday 19 November 2008 as follows:

- Hearing for the Inquiry into Transport Needs of Sydney's North West Sector, 10.30 am – 1:00 pm, and that the Committee invite representatives from: the Office of the Coordinator General, Department of Premier and Cabinet; NSW Ministry of Transport; NSW Department of Planning; NSW Treasury; RailCorp; State Transit Authority; Roads and Traffic Authority; and representatives of the Growth Centres Commission
- Supplementary Budget Estimates hearing for the Transport portfolio, 2:00 – 5:00 pm.

5. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 1.20 pm until 10.15 am, Wednesday 19 November 2008.

Madeleine Foley
Clerk to the Committee

Minutes No. 23

Wednesday 19 November 2008

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4

Room 814/815, Parliament House, Sydney at 10.17 am

1. Members present

Miss Jenny Gardiner (*Chair*)
Ms Amanda Fazio (*Tsang*)

Ms Kayee Griffin
 Mr Matthew Mason-Cox (*Clarke*)
 Ms Lee Rhiannon
 Mr John Robertson (*Voltz*)
 Mr Roy Smith

2. Substitute members

The Chair advised that she had received written advice that Ms Fazio would be substituting for Mr Tsang, Mr Mason-Cox for Mr Clarke, and Mr Robertson for Ms Voltz for the purposes of the hearing.

3. Previous minutes

Resolved on the motion of Mr Smith: That draft Minutes No. 22 be published.

4. Correspondence

Received

- 18 November 2008 – Answers to questions on notice from the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC).

Sent

- 13 November 2008 – Letter from Chair to Mr Peter Duncan, Deputy Director General, Department of Premier and Cabinet requesting the attendance of representatives from the Office of Coordinator General, Department of Premier and Cabinet; NSW Ministry of Transport; NSW Department of Planning; NSW Treasury; RailCorp; State Transit Authority; Roads and Traffic Authority; and from the Growth Centres Commission in order to give evidence at the public hearing for the inquiry into the Transport Needs for Sydney's North West Region on Wednesday 19 November 2008.

5. Publication of submissions

Resolved on the motion of Mr Smith: That according to section 4 of the Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975 and Standing Order 223(1), the Committee authorise the publication of submission Nos: 81a and 185.

6. Publication of answers to questions on notice

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Smith: That the Committee publish the answers to questions on notice from the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC) received on 18 November 2008.

7. Return of answers to questions taken on notice

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mason-Cox: That the Committee request witnesses to return answers to questions taken on notice at the public hearing of 19 November 2008 by Thursday 4 December 2008.

8. Public hearing – Inquiry into transport needs of Sydney's North West sector

The public and media were admitted. The Chair made a statement regarding procedural matters.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Peter Duncan, Acting Deputy Director General, Office of the Coordinator General
- Mr Jim Glasson, Director General, NSW Ministry of Transport
- Mr Marcus Ray, Acting Executive Director, Metropolitan Planning, NSW Department of Planning
- Mr Angus Dawson, Chief Executive Officer, Growth Centres Commission
- Mr Michael Schur, Deputy Secretary, Office of Infrastructure Management, NSW Treasury
- Mr Les Wielinga, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

9. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 12:48 pm until 2:00 pm 19 November 2008.

Rachel Simpson
Clerk to the Committee

Draft Minutes No. 25

Monday 15 December 2008

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4

Room 1102, Parliament House, Sydney at 10:00 am

1. Members present

Miss Jenny Gardiner (*Chair*)

Mr David Clarke

Ms Kayee Griffin

Ms Lee Rhiannon

Mr Roy Smith

Mr Henry Tsang

Ms Lynda Voltz

Mr Tony Catanzarati (*Tsang*)

Mr Mick Veitch (*Voltz*)

2. Substitute members

The Chair advised that she had received written advice from the Deputy Government Whip of the following substitutions:

- Mr Catanzarati to substitute for Mr Tsang from 11:00am
- Mr Veitch to substitute for Ms Voltz from 12:00pm.

3. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Smith: That draft Minutes No. 23 and 24 be confirmed.

4. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following item of correspondence:

Received

- 28 November 2008 – From Mr Ken Morrison, NSW Executive Director, Property Council of Australia
- 4 December 2008 – From Mr Peter Duncan, Acting Deputy Director General, Department of Premier and Cabinet
- 9 December 2008 – From Mr Alex Gooding, Executive Director, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd

5. Publication of answers to questions on notice

Resolved on the motion of Mr Clarke: That, according to section 4 of the Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975 and Standing Order 223(1), the Committee authorise the publication of the answers to questions on notice received from:

- Mr Ken Morrison, NSW Executive Director, Property Council of Australia
- Mr Peter Duncan, Acting Deputy Director General, Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Mr Alex Gooding, Executive Director, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd

6. Inquiry into the transport needs of Sydney's North-West Sector – Consideration of Chair's draft report

The Chair submitted her draft report titled: 'The transport needs of Sydney's North-West sector' which having been previously circulated was taken as being read.

The Committee proceeded to consider the draft report in detail.

Chapter 1 read.

Resolved on the motion of Mr Clarke: That Chapter 1 be adopted.

Chapter 2 read.

Resolved on the motion of Ms Voltz: That the Secretariat draft additional paragraphs for Chapter 2 to further define the North West Sector to be circulated and considered by the Committee at a later time in the meeting.

Resolved on the motion of Mr Smith: That paragraph 2.10 be amended by omitting the words *Local resident, Mr Chris Cunliffe-Jones* and inserting instead *A local resident*.

Resolved on the motion of Ms Voltz: That the footnote to paragraph 2.15 be amended to note that in the advice provided by the Ministry of Transport 69,000 commuter trips do not fall within the primary categories.

Resolved on the motion of Ms Voltz: That paragraph 2.20 be amended by inserting the word *Sub-region* after the word *West*.

Ms Rhiannon moved:

- That the sentence at the end of paragraph 2.27 be omitted:
The Committee is therefore recommending that the Roads and Traffic Authority and the Ministry of Transport review and prioritise the road projects listed in Appendix 5.
- That the draft recommendation 1 be omitted:
That the Roads and Traffic Authority and the Ministry of Transport review and prioritise the road projects listed in Appendix 5 and advise a timeframe for completion, as part of the Government's response to this report.

Question put.

The Committee divided.

Ayes: Ms Griffin, Ms Rhiannon, Mr Tsang, Ms Voltz

Noes: Mr Clarke, Miss Gardiner, Mr Smith

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Ms Voltz moved: That paragraph 2.36 be amended by

- Omitting the word *although* appearing after the word *that* in the first sentence
- Inserting the word *Sector* after the word *West* in the first sentence
- Omitting the words *this is a result of limited or non-existent alternatives* appearing after the word *cars* in the first sentence

- Omitting the last sentence of the paragraph: *The Committee is also of the view that the 'car lover' tag is an unfair representation of a community that is pleading for the NSW Government to provide improved public transport.*

Question put.

The Committee divided:

Ayes: Ms Griffin, Ms Rhiannon, Mr Smith, Mr Tsang, Ms Voltz

Noes: Miss Gardiner, Mr Clarke

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Ms Voltz moved: That paragraph 2.93 be amended by omitting the following sentences:

If the promises of that document had been implemented, the North West would have already been enjoying the benefits of a rail line from Parramatta to Chatswood for two years and be looking forward to the opening of a rail link from Epping to Castle Hill in 2010. Instead residents are still waiting for the truncated Chatswood to Epping rail line to open and have been told that a north west rail link has been indefinitely deferred.

Question put.

The Committee divided:

Ayes: Ms Griffin, Mr Smith, Mr Tsang, Ms Voltz

Noes: Mr Clarke, Miss Gardiner, Ms Rhiannon

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Chapter 3 read.

Resolved on the motion of Ms Rhiannon: That draft recommendation 2 be amended by:

- Inserting the word “*undertaking*” before the word “*land*”
- Inserting the following additional part to the recommendation: *“That the NSW Government prepare a submission for inclusion of this project on the National Infrastructure Priority List, and, if the project fails to attract federal funding, the NSW Government fund the north west rail link.”*

Resolved on the motion of Ms Voltz: That, after paragraph 3.83, the following additional paragraph be inserted:

The Committee notes that the majority of travel movements are within the sub-region and not to the CBD. The Government should consider a North West metro link to Parramatta as an option for submission to Infrastructure Australia.

Resolved on the motion of Ms Rhiannon: That draft recommendation 3 be amended by omitting all the words appearing after North West Metro:

in terms of meeting the criteria for submission to Infrastructure Australia for inclusion on the National Infrastructure Priority List.

That if the opportunity arises for further submissions to Infrastructure Australia, the NSW Government seek funding for a North West rail link.

Resolved on the motion of Ms Voltz: That, Chapter 3, as amended, be adopted.

Mr Tsang left the meeting.

Mr Catanzariti joined the meeting.

Chapter 4 read.

Ms Rhiannon moved:

- That paragraph 4.42 be amended by omitting the following sentence:
Given the current review of bus services for the North West, which is to include public consultation, it is timely that consideration should be given to the proposal developed by Mr Stapleton.
- That draft recommendation 7 be omitted:
That as part of the current review of bus service networks for regions one and four, the Ministry of Transport formally request, and give consideration to, the proposal prepared by Mr Chris Stapleton relating to a bus network to service the North West Sector.

Question put.

The Committee divided:

Ayes: Mr Catanzariti, Ms Griffin, Ms Rhiannon, Ms Voltz

Noes: Mr Clarke, Miss Gardiner, Mr Smith

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Resolved on the motion of Ms Rhiannon: That the following recommendation be inserted after paragraph 4.42:

That the Ministry of Transport expand bus services in the North West by constructing a dedicated bus lane on the five kilometres of road between the M2 and the T-Way.

That the Ministry of Transport provide the majority of residents within the North West region with light rail or bus services on a regular basis and within easy walking distance of their residences.

Ms Rhiannon moved: That draft recommendation 8 be omitted:

That, as a matter of urgency, the NSW Government examine and pursue the potential to combine State and federal funds with private investment to construct a metro network that include a North West line.

Question put.

The Committee divided:

Ayes: Mr Catanzariti, Ms Griffin, Ms Rhiannon, Ms Voltz

Noes: Mr Clarke, Miss Gardiner, Mr Smith

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Resolved on the motion of Ms Voltz: That draft recommendation 9 be amended by: omitting the word “negotiate” and inserting instead “when negotiating”, and by omitting the words “with a view to ensuring” and inserting instead “to ensure”.

Ms Rhiannon moved: That draft recommendation 10 be omitted:

That, in taking into account the indefinite deferral of a North West rail link, the NSW Government consider further reducing developer levies as they relate to the North West sector.

Question put.

The Committee divided:

Ayes: Mr Catanzariti, Ms Griffin, Ms Rhiannon, Mr Smith, Ms Voltz

Noes: Mr Clarke, Miss Gardiner

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Resolved on the motion of Ms Rhiannon: That draft recommendation 12 be amended by adding the following words at the end:

As a first step, the NSW Government establish an independent body, the North West Region Transport Board, to develop an integrated, sustainable transport plan for the North West Sector, that could act as a model for other regions of New South Wales.

Ms Voltz moved: That the following paragraph 4.161 be omitted:

The Committee does not believe the Government is doing the wrong thing by enhancing the transport services from the North West to the Sydney CBD. Rather, it is a case that the Government is not doing enough to also provide services to other primary travel routes.

Question put.

The Committee divided:

Ayes: Mr Catanzariti, Ms Griffin, Mr Smith, Ms Voltz

Noes: Mr Clarke, Miss Gardiner, Ms Rhiannon

Resolved on the motion of Ms Voltz: That, Chapter 4, as amended, be adopted.

Ms Voltz left the meeting.

The Committee adjourned briefly at 11:35am.

The Committee reconvened at 12:00pm.

Mr Veitch joined the meeting.

The Chair circulated the proposed amendments to Chapter 2 prepared by the secretariat.

Resolved on the motion of Ms Griffin: That the following paragraph be inserted after paragraph 2.7:

The North West Sector includes the local government areas of the following Metropolitan Strategy subregions:

- *North: Hornsby had a population of 157,400 in 2006*
- *Inner North: Ryde had a population of 99,800 in 2004*
- *West Central: Parramatta had a population of 151,000 in 2004*
- *North West has a total population of 768,000 in 2006, consisting of:*
 - Baulkham Hills: 170,000*
 - Blacktown: 280,000*
 - Blue Mountains: 76,000*
 - Hawkesbury: 62,000*
 - Penrith: 180,000.*

Resolved on the motion of Ms Griffin: That paragraph 2.12 be amended by adding the following sentence: *These statistics refer specifically to the north west subregion but illustrate the transport movements within the north west sector more generally.*

Resolved on the motion of Ms Rhiannon: That Chapter 2, as amended, be adopted.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Clarke: That the draft report as amended be the report of the Committee.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Clarke: That the Committee present the report to the House, together with transcripts of evidence, submissions, tabled documents, answers to questions on notice, minutes of proceedings and correspondence relating to the inquiry, except for in camera evidence and documents kept confidential by resolution of the Committee.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Griffin: That dissenting reports be sent to the secretariat by 5:00 pm on Tuesday 16 December 2008.

7. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 12:18 pm until Wednesday 4 March 2009 at 10:45 am.

Rachel Simpson
Clerk to the Committee