

**Submission  
No 3**

## **SYDNEY METRO WEST PROJECT**

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I generally support the concept of Metro West, but not the route chosen, nor its claimed justification for relieving congestion on the T1 Western Line or providing a faster journey time from Parramatta to the CBD, which is questionable. I regard it as a useful addition to Sydney's rail network, servicing a new corridor between Parramatta and the CBD, but it's not a priority.

In respect of the current alignment, it is inferior to the previous Labor government West Metro proposal, which followed the northern Parramatta Rd corridor from Central to Parramatta/Westmead via Broadway/Sydney University, Camperdown, Leichhardt, Five Dock, Burwood, Strathfield, Sydney Olympic Park, Silverwater and Camellia. It connected at Central with the cancelled Central to Rozelle Metro.

It seems that the current alignment from the CBD was chosen to include The Bays Precinct, which was part of the original North West Metro proposal along the Victoria Rd corridor via Ryde. It's academic now, but it would have been better if the original West Metro alignment had been implemented and the currently proposed station sites at Pyrmont and The Bays were preserved for a future metro line along the Victoria Rd corridor to Ryde and beyond.

That could still be a future possibility if it is feasible to branch it from Metro West at The Bays along the Victoria Rd corridor to Ryde, then Eastwood, Carlingford and North Rocks, terminating and interchanging at Baulkham Hills with the proposed Norwest metro link from Parramatta. I can't see how Metro West would ever warrant a frequency of 30 trains per hour, which would otherwise be wasted without branching and considering that there is already an existing T1 Western Line which can be further upgraded.

The claimed justification for relieving congestion on the current T1 Western Line doesn't stand up to scrutiny. While it certainly adds greater capacity between Parramatta/Westmead and the CBD, there is little explanation of how in practice it will relieve overcrowding, at least prior to Covid, on the T1 Line west of Westmead. The T1 Line doesn't end at Westmead.

It is assumed that outer western T1 commuters can interchange to Metro West at Westmead for a supposedly faster journey time to the CBD.(interchange at Parramatta isn't an option because of the distance between the Sydney Trains' and metro stations). However, that doesn't address the overcrowding west of Westmead without providing more Sydney Trains' services on that sector.

There is certainly enough spare capacity on the existing T1 quad tracks west of Parramatta to provide more services, but not to the east of Parramatta to the CBD where other lines merge. That would require forced interchange for additional services to the metro, which wouldn't be popular, and that's assuming that it's even practicable to terminate those services at Parramatta or Westmead, which it isn't.

Community consultation for future T3 rail services west of Bankstown following its conversion to metro overwhelmingly favoured a reinstatement of the direct Liverpool via Regents Park service to the City Circle, rather than being forced to interchange to the metro at Bankstown. Transport for NSW agreed. I'm sure that if consultation was carried out for T1 commuters, requiring interchange to Metro West to reach the CBD, there would be a similar response. They would want a direct journey and not to mention more seats per train on the existing double deck rolling stock.

That leads to the question of an alternative strategy to relieve congestion and increase services on the greater T1 Line, reaching out to Penrith and Richmond. The bleedingly obvious solution is to upgrade capacity on the existing T1 Line.

Transport for NSW had previously proposed a draft sextuplication scheme for the existing line between Homebush and Parramatta, but this was superseded by the Metro West proposal, requiring

interchange. It should have been a complementary project to increase capacity for outer T1 Western Line services, allowing a direct journey to the CBD.

There is currently spare capacity on the Western Main Line between Strathfield and Sydney Terminal, which only has 12 trains per hour in the peak. Sextuplication would allow T1 services to be completely separated from T2 services on the Homebush/Granville corridor and increase the capacity for more direct outer T1 express services to Sydney Terminal, as well as maintaining existing T1 services through the CBD across the Harbour Bridge. In the longer term, an express tunnel could be constructed from the sextuplication to link with the previously proposed City Relief Line to Wynyard and possibly continuing across the eastern traffic lanes of the Harbour Bridge to North Sydney and the Northern Beaches, for which stub tunnels were built as part of Bradfield's original plan.

The greatest folly for Metro West was planning for a 20 minute journey time from Parramatta to the CBD. All that did was to restrict the number stations along the route to fit within the journey time, when it isn't needed.

The current fastest express journey time with the existing signalling from Parramatta to Central is 25 minutes and 28 minutes to Town Hall. That doesn't take into consideration the improved journey times with the proposed digital signalling and Automatic Train Operation upgrades for the Sydney Trains' network.

The claimed journey time of 20 minutes for Metro West from Parramatta to the CBD isn't explicit enough. How do you define the CBD? The Hunter St Metro West station is but one of ten existing and proposed CBD stations. The greatest patronage is at Town Hall and Central and to get to those stations from Hunter St would require interchange with a long walk to either Wynyard or Martin Place stations. Upgrades to the existing Sydney Trains' lines would be more than competitive with Metro West, depending on the destination.

The illusory faster journey time for Metro West from Parramatta to the CBD should be shelved and instead focus on increasing its catchment area with the inclusion of more stations where feasible, even at this late stage.. Camellia, Silverwater and Lilyfield are obvious examples. It is also ridiculous in having only one CBD station at Hunter St.

With regard to metro expansion in general, the continuing upgrading of the far larger Sydney Trains' network under the More Trains, More Services program, which seems to have taken a back seat lately, should take precedence. .