

**Submission  
No 19**

## **SYDNEY METRO WEST PROJECT**

**Organisation:** Mecone

**Date Received:** 19 September 2023

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Clerk of the Legislative Assembly  
NSW Parliament House  
6 Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

**ATTN: NSW Legislative Assembly Transport Committee**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Submission to NSW Legislative Assembly Transport Committee – Sydney Metro West Project**

This letter of submission has been prepared by Mecone Group on behalf of St Alban's Five Dock (land owner) and Traders in Purple (prospective developer) with regard to land at 175-185 Great North Road & 1A-1B Henry Street, Five Dock (the site).

St Alban's Church at Five Dock is an active Anglican church site which forms part of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney. The site has been occupied by the diocese since the 1850s and provides regular church services as well as number of community activities including ballet classes, playgroups and events. The site is occupied by three local heritage items which require ongoing restoration and maintenance works.

National property group, Traders in Purple, have been appointed by the Anglican Diocese of Sydney to lead the urban renewal of the site. Renewal of the site aims to deliver a recurrent income for the diocese to support the operations and maintenance for the St Alban's Five Dock, as well as Drummoyne, Ashfield and Haberfield church sites.

**1. SYDNEY METRO WEST – FINAL BUSINESS CASE**

Sydney Metro West is proposed as an integrated land use and transport project. The project is driven by a need to: *increase public transport capacity; support employment growth and housing supply; and improve public transport options and benefits for customers by providing a reliable and frequent turn up and go service*<sup>1</sup>.

The delivery of Sydney Metro West is underpinned by the need to support Sydney's growing population. As a global city, Sydney's population is forecast to grow by 1.7 million people from 2016 to 2036<sup>2</sup>. Due to Sydney's monocentric design, additional stresses are placed on Sydney's transport system due to existing and planned urban sprawl.

*Currently the Sydney region experiences stresses that emerge from its monocentric nature. The majority of jobs are concentrated in and around the Eastern Harbour City, while residential homes are spread throughout the region. This creates an imbalance between the physical location of jobs and residents. A significant portion of Greater Sydney's residents need to travel over 30 minutes as part of their daily commute to work.*<sup>3</sup>

Sydney Metro West is identified to play a critical role in supporting the 30-minute cities concept. It forms the spine of a future city-shaping mass transit network, providing a key east-west connection in Greater Sydney. The Final Business Case identifies the urgent need to develop the project to enable land use outcomes and reduce future capacity constraints.

The project is also identified to generate significant city-shaping, urban renewal, productivity and transport benefits. In particular, the project was recognised to support an additional 169,000 jobs and

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<sup>1</sup> Infrastructure NSW, *Final Business Case Evaluation Summary: Sydney Metro West*, July 2020, p1

<sup>2</sup> Infrastructure NSW, p3

<sup>3</sup> Infrastructure NSW, p3



**46,000 dwellings within walking catchments of metro stations**, which were integral to the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) calculations for the project.

Five Dock was identified as one of eight recommended station locations for Sydney Metro West. The key design drivers for Five Dock were identified to:

- *Create an easy, efficient and accessible interchange linking the bus networks along Parramatta Road, Victoria Road, the Drummoyne peninsula and parts of the Inner West.*
- **Serve and support renewal of the established local centre around Five Dock.**
- *Provide a direct rail service to a catchment not currently serviced by rail.*

(Emphasis Added)

## 2. SYDNEY METRO WEST – ROUTE SELECTION

Chapter 3 of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prepare for ‘Sydney Metro West – Concept and Stage 1’ State Significant Infrastructure application (SSI-10038), evaluates the process which was undertaken to determine the preferred option for Sydney Metro West.

Preliminary investigations identified that stations at Parramatta, Sydney Olympic Park, The Bays and Sydney Central Business District (CBD) as core centres to the concept development for Sydney Metro West.

A number of route and station options were investigated with connections to the T1 Western Line and T9 Northern Line identified to offer significant relief to existing services and support faster travel times. Between the T9 Northern Line and The Bays, 13 station options were assessed. Evaluation and assessment of station options identified stations at Burwood North and Five Dock could deliver significant benefits. In relation to the Five Dock, a new Metro station was identified to:

*Open a new rail catchment and deliver significant travel time savings of more than 30 minutes for customers travelling to the Sydney CBD and about 30 minutes for customers travelling to the Parramatta CBD Provide an efficient bus to metro interchange and help relieve the bus network along Parramatta Road, Victoria Road, the Drummoyne peninsula and parts of the Inner West entering the Sydney CBD<sup>4</sup>.*

## 3. FIVE DOCK

### Current Context

Five Dock is a local centre within Canada Bay local government area (LGA), located 10km west of the Sydney CBD.

The local centre is identified as a mixed use locality generally consisting of ground floor level commercial/retail and residential accommodation above. The central spine of Five Dock, Great North Road, is characterised by a 2-4 storey street frontage with building heights ranging from 2-7 storeys.

Five Dock is not currently serviced by existing rail infrastructure and relies on a series of bus routes which provide access to Belmore, Sydney CBD, Rockdale and Chatswood. Average peak travel times to Sydney CBD via bus typically range from 40mins to 1 hour.

The residential population of Five Dock in 2021 was 9,823 across 4,252 dwellings<sup>5</sup>.

### Planned Context

Five Dock Metro Station is currently under construction on Great North Road and planned to be operational by 2030.

With the operation of Sydney Metro West, the Five Dock precinct would experience significant travel time

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<sup>4</sup> Sydney Metro, 15 April 2020, *Environmental Impact Statement, Chapter 3 Sydney Metro West development and alternatives*, p3-8.

<sup>5</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Five Dock, Access 15 September 2023 via <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/SAL11533>



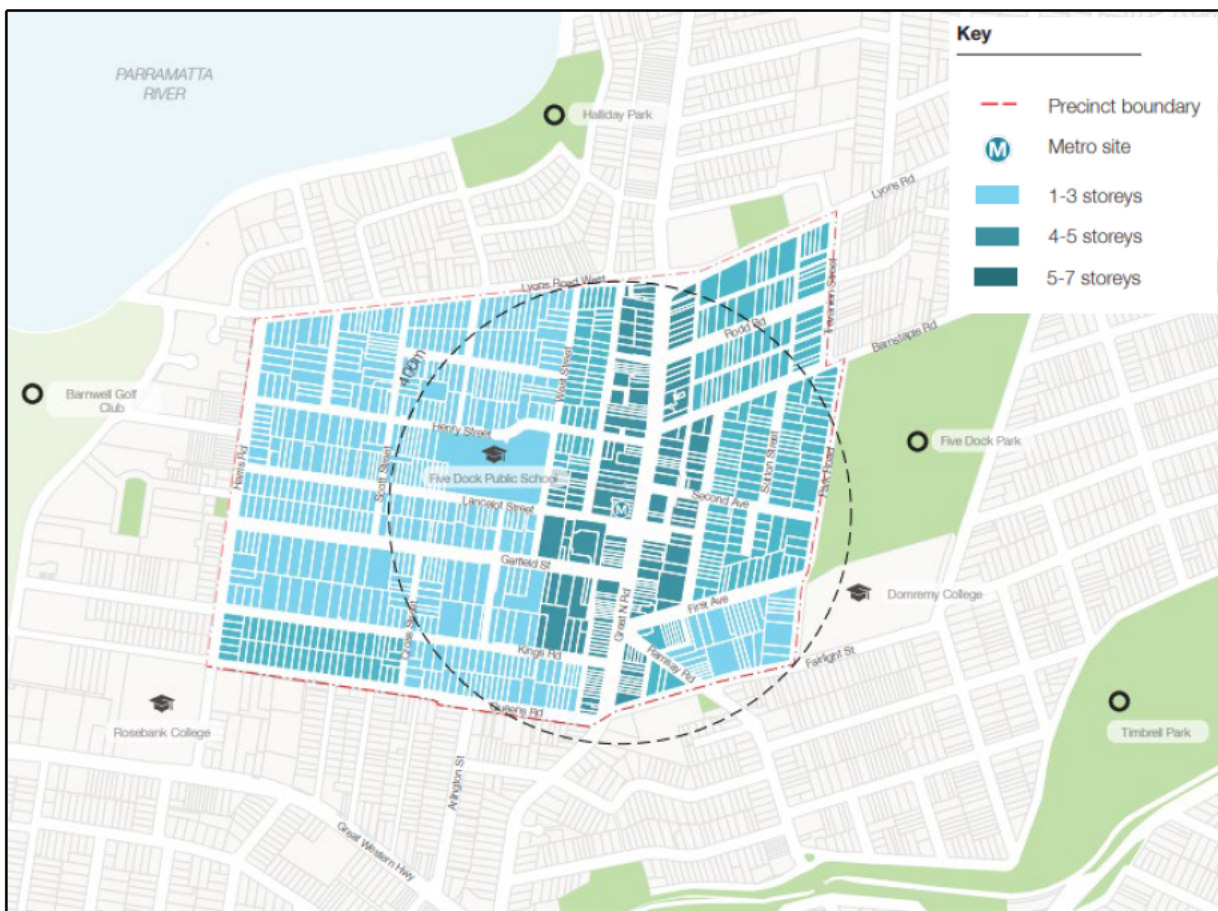
savings to Sydney and Parramatta CBD's. It is expected that a trip on Sydney Metro West from Five Dock to Sydney CBD to take less than 10 minutes which is a significant travel time saving in comparison to current bus trips which can take up to an hour<sup>6</sup>. Such a time saving could be expected to have a transformational effect on the role of the centre.

With the inclusion of the Metro Station, Five Dock is more likely to grow in role and function as its accessibility to the City and Parramatta improves.

Local Character Planning Statements (LCPS) have been developed for the 3 Metro Station localities, Five Dock, Burwood North and North Strathfield, within Canada Bay LGA. The adopted LCPS will be used to inform the preparation of a detailed Masterplan and Planning Proposal for identified localities.

The desired character for the 'Town Centre Core' sub-precinct, envisions that the Great North Road will continue to be the heart of Five Dock and that future development would “*complement the existing scale of the street, with heights between four (4) and seven (7) storeys*” with “*levels above the existing 2 storey street wall setback.*”<sup>7</sup>

A 'Transition' sub-precinct to the east and west of the 'Town Centre Core to support building heights of 4-5 storeys.



**FIGURE 1 – BUILDING HEIGHTS – SYDNEY METRO WEST PLANNING STUDY STAGE 2 URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK**

Source: SJB, May 2023

<sup>6</sup> State Significant Infrastructure – Sydney Metro West | SSI-22765520

<sup>7</sup> SJB Architects, May 2023, *City of Canada Bay Local Planning Study: Five Dock Metro Precinct*.

#### 4. THE SITE

The site is located at 171-179 Great North Road & 1A – 1B Henry Street, Five Dock (the site) and is within the City of Canada Bay Local Government Area (LGA). The site has an approximate land area of 4,037m<sup>2</sup>.

The existing development contained within the site consists of St Alban’s Anglican Church, Rectory and Hall/Shops, two red brick detached dwellings, as well as the associated parking and landscaping. The site has three frontages: Great North Road to the east, Henry Street to the north and East Street to the west.

The site directly adjoins Five Dock Metro station (under construction) to the south, which is planned to be operational by 2030. The site’s location adjacent to the Five Dock Metro station site is shown in Figure 2 below.

The site was excluded from the urban design framework under the LCPS due to the heritage constraints on the site (Refer to Figure 3).



**FIGURE 2 – SITE LOCATION**

Source: Carter Williamson



**FIGURE 3 – FIVE DOCK POTENTIAL BUILT FORM MASSING**

Source: SJB, May 2023



## 5. SYDNEY'S GROWING POPULATION AND HOUSING NEEDS

It is well documented that Sydney is currently undergoing a housing supply crisis with the city's median property price surging to 13.3 times median incomes and with 35.3% of renters in housing stress<sup>8</sup>.

The NSW Government forecasts around 119,400 to 138,550 new homes will be built across Greater Sydney between 2022-23 to 2026-27. This significantly less than the 171,500 supply forecasted for the same period<sup>9</sup>. Since 2017-18, the rate of dwelling completions have fallen from 42,183 to 24,641 (2021-22)<sup>10</sup>. It is noted that this has been partly attributable to pre- and post-COVID 19 housing market slow down and record highs in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

More recently, National Cabinet has agreed on a new ambitious target to build 1.2 million new well-located homes over five years from 1 July 2024<sup>11</sup> requiring greater housing supply in Greater Sydney.

Having a closer look at the Canada Bay LGA, only 112 dwellings were completed between April 2022 to March 2023<sup>12</sup>. This is significantly lower than the average supply forecast of 385 (2023-2027). With only 267 approvals between April 2022 to March 2023, a shortfall in housing supply for future years is anticipated.

## 6. DELIVERY OF METRO WEST IN FIVE DOCK

Five Dock Metro Station is a once-in-a-century infrastructure investment and will deliver significant transport capacity to the Five Dock area and presents a significant opportunity to support increased housing supply. In realising Greater Sydney's vision for '30-minute city', the introduction of the Sydney Metro station is anticipated to have significant travel time savings of more than 35 minutes for travel between Five Dock and Sydney CBD.

Following the recent publication from the NSW Productivity Commission 'Building more homes where infrastructure costs less', Peter Archterstraat, has advised that both the Sydney Metro West and South West lines "offer significant opportunities for efficiently accommodating population growth [and will] deliver a substantial amount of capacity for housing on the lower north Shore, and in the inner west and inner south-west".<sup>13</sup>

Specifically identifying the future Five Dock Sydney Metro station, he adds:

*"Currently Five Dock residents must travel by bus along heavily congested roads such as Parramatta Road and Victoria Road [and] we estimate that commuters in Five Dock can currently access only around three per cent of the jobs in Greater Sydney by public transport within 30 minutes," it stated.*

*"With a Metro service in place, Five Dock commuters could reach transit hubs like Parramatta and the CBD quickly and would be able to reach up to 45 per cent of Sydney's jobs within 30 minutes."*

To address Sydney's housing shortage, transit orientated development sites such as Five Dock must be considered more closely. Failure to optimise such significant transport investment will result in increased public costs and continued housing stress.

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<sup>8</sup> Tasmin Rose, 7 September 2023, *Only five cities worldwide are more unaffordable than Sydney for housing, thinktank says*, The Guardian

<sup>9</sup> NSW Government: Planning, *Forecast insights*, Accessed 15 September 2023 via

<https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/research-and-demography/sydney-housing-supply-forecast/forecast-insights>

<sup>10</sup> NSW Government, *Greater Sydney Urban Development Program Dashboard*, Accessed 15 September 2023 via

<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiaWk5N2NiMmYtYTZhZC00N2E5LTgyNWYtOTU4YzIzYTA5OTY1IiwidCI6IjI2ZWY4ODIxLTJhMzktNDcxYy1iODIhLTU3YjA4MzNkZDNiOSJ9>

<sup>11</sup> Prime Minister of Australia, 16 August 2023, *Media Release*, Australian Government.

<https://www.pm.gov.au/media/meeting-national-cabinet-working-together-deliver-better-housing-outcomes#:~:text=That's%20why%20National%20Cabinet%20has,states%20and%20territories%20last%20year.>

<sup>12</sup> ...

<sup>13</sup> The Sydney Morning Herald, *Sydney sprawl costs economy \$75,000 more per new home: report*, 28 August 2023, Michael McGowan.



The scale and density envisaged by Council for Five Dock under the LCPS does not reflect the significance of this city-shaping infrastructure investment and will ultimately fail in generating any meaningful urban renewal. In comparison to other station localities, there are minimal planning constraints that would restrict further density in Five Dock.

To avoid further urban sprawl and significant costs on the public sector and future residents, greater density surrounding existing and planned transport nodes must be achieved.

Moreover, optimal population densities in proximity to Metro stations, such as Five Dock, is crucial in achieving adequate patronage that ensures the efficient use and fiscal viability of Sydney Metro West.

## 7. CONCLUSION

A key objective of Sydney Metro West is to support additional housing supply and employment growth opportunities.

Sydney is undergoing a significant housing supply crisis. Development uplift around key transport nodes is necessary to unlock crucial housing supply. Long term urban sprawl is not the answer to Sydney's housing supply crisis as it draws significantly more infrastructure costs than infill developments.

Furthermore, with the very significant investment that has been made into the construction of the Metro, it is important that populations within walking catchments of stations are optimised to ensure efficient use of the Metro and return on investment through ticket sales.

The potential built form massing identified for Five Dock under the LCPS does not reflect the significance of this city-shaping infrastructure investment and will ultimately fail in generating any meaningful urban renewal.

Five Dock is capable and suitable for additional development uplift, comparable to that of other station locations within 10 minutes of the Sydney CBD.

Should you wish to discuss the above further, please contact me on [REDACTED] or via [REDACTED].

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Ian Cady  
Director