

**Submission
No 23**

SYDNEY METRO WEST PROJECT

Organisation: The Centre for Western Sydney

Date Received: 19 September 2023



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19 September 2023

Ms. Lynda Voltz

Chair

Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport
and Infrastructure

Via portal

Dear Chairperson,

Re: Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport and Infrastructure Inquiry into the Sydney Metro West project.

The Centre for Western Sydney, a part of Western Sydney University, combines world-class research expertise, thought provoking events, and frank and fearless advocacy on issues of importance to Western Sydney. The work of the Centre for Western Sydney is guided by its ambition for a thriving region that is understood and respected for its strengths and contributions regionally, nationally, and internationally.

While the Sydney Metro West will be a transformative piece of infrastructure, there is growing concern from stakeholders that this generational project will not deliver the desired impact for Western Sydney. Changes must be considered, particularly in ensuring that both the route and proposed stations are situated where they will deliver maximum impact for residents and businesses within the region.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact [REDACTED], Policy and Strategy Lead, on [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely

Professor Andy Marks

Executive Director
Centre for Western Sydney



LANE
24hrs

SYDNEY METRO WEST PROJECT

INQUIRY SUBMISSION – SEPTEMBER 2023



**CENTRE FOR
WESTERN SYDNEY**

KEY PRINCIPLES FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT DELIVERY IN WESTERN SYDNEY

Western Sydney's public transport system, and its subsequent impact on residents' participation in economic, educational, and social opportunities, is regularly featured in insights that are shared with the Centre for Western Sydney by representatives from industry, government and community across the region.

In the Centre's consultations with stakeholders over the past twelve months, four broad principles have emerged regarding the effective and appropriate provision of public transport in Western Sydney:

1. AFFORDABILITY

Public transport must remain an affordable option for all sections of the population.

2. ACCESSIBILITY

Public transport must be physically, digitally and linguistically accessible for all residents

3. CONNECTIVITY

Public transport must take people where they need to go – within and beyond Western Sydney.

4. BROADER IMPACT

Public transport investment must be viewed as a catalyst for development and liveability.

WESTERN SYDNEY – CAR DEPENDENCE AND SIGNIFICANT GROWTH

Poorly integrated public transport is a key contributor to vehicle dependency in the region, with many residents relying on private transport to support their day to day lives. Western Sydney has significantly high levels of private vehicle usage, with 85.6% of commuters in the region using a private vehicle as their sole method of transportation to their workplace¹. When contrasted with international best practice in planning, which sets a benchmark of 80% non-car travel for high density developments², it is clear that more must be done to deliver public transport options which are appropriate for residents.

The Sydney Metro West represents a significant opportunity to connect residents, particularly in the Parramatta Local Government Area (LGA), to reliable public transport. Nearly 172,000 additional people are projected to reside in this LGA by 2041³, with growth driven largely through high density developments that align with the potential footprint of the Sydney Metro West.

If reliable public transport infrastructure is not easily accessible for these residents, they will be forced to utilise private vehicles, further adding to congestion issues on major roads such as the M4 and Parramatta Road, and subsequently impacting on productivity more broadly.

¹ Census Data, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023

² Transport impacts of new high-density housing, RMIT, 2020

³ City of Parramatta – Population Forecast, id, 2023

SYDNEY METRO WEST CONFIGURATION

Since Labor initially unveiled its Metro line in 2009, there have been a range of refinements to the route and proposed stations that have been considered. The Sydney Metro West's Environmental Impact Statement shows that a number of options were tabled before the final configuration was adopted, with priority given to ensuring the optimum travel time between the city and Parramatta, 20 minutes, was retained⁴.



Map of current Sydney Metro West route.

Sydney Metro, 2023

Notably, proposed stations at Rydalmere and Camellia were ultimately not selected to proceed, despite the benefits identified during the planning process. It was found that a stop in Camellia would “present considerable constructability challenges in relation to contamination and flooding”⁵, while Rydalmere was ruled out due to the time it would add to the journey between Parramatta and the city⁶.

CAMELLIA AS A PRIORITY

At present, there is still more that can be done to ensure that the configuration of stations is weighted sufficiently towards the western portion of the metro line. Failure to do so will compound the imbalance of employment opportunities between Western Sydney and the rest of Sydney, leading to longer travel times and poorer outcomes for residents.

While the constraints around delivering an additional station in the Camellia Town Centre should be acknowledged, it is important that it be re-considered as an option by the committee. This would require a re-calibration of the current route, with the metro line moving north from Silverwater to align with the footprint of Camellia.

The establishment of a metro station in Camellia will provide a catalyst for further growth in the area, supporting the NSW Government's objective to urgently increase housing stock in the region. Developers have publicly committed to financially supporting the construction of the station⁷, and it would be worthwhile to explore how Camellia can be used to pilot public/private funding models to deliver vital transport infrastructure at the scale required to deliver impact.

There is also the opportunity to explore how a metro station situated in Camellia Town Centre can integrate with the planned stop on the light rail network. This has the potential to improve connectivity outcomes for commuters by delivering a more seamless public transport experience, and further reduce car reliance within the area.

⁴ Sydney Metro West Environmental Impact Statement | Westmead to The Bays and Sydney CBD, Sydney Metro, 2021

⁵ *ibid*

⁶ Strategic station options: Pyrmont and Rydalmere update, Sydney Metro, 2020

⁷ Developers put their hand up to help cover Metro West, in exchange for thousands of homes, ABC News, 2023



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