

**Submission
No 31**

SYDNEY METRO WEST PROJECT

Organisation: Venues NSW
Date Received: 22 September 2023

18 September 2023

The Hon. Lynda Voltz MLC
Chair, Committee on Transport and Infrastructure
Parliament of NSW
6 Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Submission to the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure Inquiry into the Sydney West Metro Project

Dear Ms Voltz,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure's Inquiry into the Sydney Metro West Project, specifically in relation to the establishment of the route and selection of station locations.

It is Venues NSW's recommendation that the Sydney Metro West project extends into Sydney's east with a station established near the Sydney Cricket Ground and Allianz Stadium. The inclusion of a Metro station in the SCG precinct is crucial to enhancing transport equity and accessibility, reducing congestion and realising the full potential of this area.

It is critical to leverage the previous investment in rebuilding Allianz Stadium by linking this precinct with an effective and connected public transport system. One that can allow for the best experience for everyone in the community to fully utilise the education, work, sporting and entertainment opportunities across the SCG precinct and neighbouring suburbs. The station's strategic placement in a diverse precinct would cover many types of patrons including office workers, sports and entertainment workers, sports fans, concert attendees and students.

This submission will outline the reasons why an SCG precinct station on the Metro West line should be a prime consideration if the project is to increase the number of stations on the Sydney West Metro line.

Current Capacity and Attendance of Moore Park Precinct

Since the opening of Allianz Stadium and CBD and South-East Light Rail, we have seen a major increase in attendance to sporting and major events in the SCG precinct, including new and emerging demographics, which has brought exciting opportunities as well as challenges.

At the recent 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, five out of the six games held at Allianz Stadium were sold out, drawing over 40,000 attendees from all over the world. Many of the patrons had never been to an event at the stadium before.

Similarly, the 2022-23 concert summer saw crowds of 35,000+ fans head to Allianz Stadium for Bruno Mars and Elton John concerts. This demand also looks set to increase as the NSW

Government looks at lifting the Concert Cap at Allianz Stadium from six to up to 20 concerts per year.

With some of the highest attendance numbers recorded since the stadium was built, it shows that there is a growing appetite for transport facilities that can match this demand for many years to come.

Mass transit is the best option to allow for increased numbers of people to get into the precinct in peak periods before an event and after events, when most patrons arrive and depart in short periods. The Environment Impact Statement for Allianz Stadium stated that "70 per cent of people arrive at events in the hour before the start of a game". When the recent average attendance for a sporting events in the SCG precinct is above 40,000, there must be a strong combination of public transport modes available to ensure a smooth arrival and departure process.

We note that establishing a station in the east continues to be a consideration as outlined in the recently released *Sydney Metro Independent Review Interim Report Summary*. The review recommended that "That Sydney Metro provide urgent advice to Government on feasibility, value-for-money, and overall alignment and station options relating to a potential eastern extension to Sydney Metro West." When the Sydney Metro West project was first announced, the NSW Government stated that they would safeguard the ability to extend the line to the south-east via Zetland.

We have also seen previous submissions aired in media from some stakeholders recommending that the Metro West line be extended south from Hunter Street to Zetland. With the turnback cavern that allows trains to turn around before travelling back towards Paramatta being built to the east of the Hunter Street station, it makes sense to extend this line further east. If the line is extended to Zetland, without a stop at Moore Park, it would be a lost opportunity for Sydney to align a globally leading transport solution to a globally leading sports and entertainment precinct.

We recommend that if Zetland is included as a Metro station that the line be directed via the SCG precinct to take this once in a lifetime opportunity to properly service this area of mass gathering.

We strongly believe that the previous investment in light rail does not preclude or prohibit further investment in heavy rail. The existing light rail serves an important role for those who live close to the CBD or Eastern Suburbs, but it serves a different purpose to a Metro station as it is designed to carry fewer people shorter distances at slower speeds. The Melbourne Cricket Ground, for example, is served by multiple light rail lines and two heavy rail stations, while Adelaide Oval, Optus Stadium in Perth, and Brisbane's Gabba and Suncorp Stadium all have heavy rail stops within a 1km walk, as well as multiple other forms of public transport.

Indeed, if a Metro Station is established in the SCG precinct, it will realise plans first made for a heavy rail stop servicing the area more than 100 years ago, which are on display in the SCG museum.

Reasons for a Metro Station in the SCG precinct

A metro station in the SCG precinct is an important step toward aligning transport infrastructure with Sydney's global city status. World-class cities are defined by accessible and efficient public transport networks, and the addition of a metro station in the SCG precinct would contribute to this image. Sydney has already shown the world how well we can organise important sporting and entertainment events and as a result we know that this precinct will grow in popularity and use. There is a strong need to ensure that upcoming infrastructure addresses the challenges that can come with transporting people to these events.

The need for improved accessibility to Sydney's original sporting, entertainment, and education hub underpins the call for a metro station connected to the SCG and Allianz Stadium. This bustling precinct attracts over two million visitors annually, many of whom live outside of the Sydney CBD. In fact, the NSW Government's submission into the Sydney Stadiums Strategy Inquiry cited data from Destination NSW that found that for events held at Accor Stadium and the former Sydney Football Stadium as many as 28 per cent of attendees were from outside Sydney.

As people visit the precinct for events, surrounding roads become congested as people try to enter the precinct via their cars as the quickest and most convenient option. The proposed metro station, capable of handling tens of thousands of passengers per hour will be able to accommodate these surges during peak events and get more of these cars off the road as people elect to use public transport instead.

More than an events precinct

Moore Park is not just a major hub for events, it is also a hub for education, fitness and a bustling commercial community. The head office of the NRL, Rugby Australia, AFL NSWACT, Sydney Roosters, all call the precinct home with many workers commuting to the area. The Sporting Club of Sydney, Disney Studios Australia, Entertainment Quarter, Moore Park and Centennial Parklands also attract thousands of workers and visitors daily from all over Sydney.

Equity and access to this precinct for those in education should be a consideration for a station at Moore Park as multiple education institutions are an integral part of the precinct. The Australian Film and Television Radio School (AFTRS), UTS Moore Park Campus and Sydney Boys and Sydney Girls High Schools attract over 3000 students and staff daily from all over Sydney. There are many students and staff who live near the Sydney Metro West catchment who would vastly benefit from a Metro stop in the Moore Park precinct and currently must travel on numerous modes of transport to attend these institutions. We want to ensure those who live in Western Sydney and want to work or study in Moore Park can effectively reach the area with a faster and more reliable transport option regardless of how many people are visiting the precinct.

We acknowledge that Moore Park is one proposed node on a metro line but the opportunity to build it is now as part of other considerations in the East of Sydney including Zetland and beyond.

By linking Westmead, Parramatta, Olympic Park, Burwood, North Strathfield, Five Dock and the CBD with Moore Park, the Government is ensuring that the area is properly utilised, traffic concerns are lessened for local residents and that Sydney enhances its reputation as

a truly global city with world class public transport that links our major sporting and entertainment venues.

Venues NSW strongly supports a Metro station at Moore Park as an essential step toward creating a well-connected, accessible, and thriving precinct. The benefits of reduced congestion, increased accessibility, and alignment with Sydney's global city status are compelling reasons to prioritise this endeavour. Venues NSW's position is supported by our entertainment partners, including the home teams and codes, as well as entertainment promoters, and other precinct partners including EQ and Disney Studios Australia.

Thank you for considering our submission.

Yours sincerely



PHILLIP HEADS

Group General Manager - Communications, Heritage and Community