

REPORT ON PROCEEDINGS BEFORE

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT
AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**INQUIRY INTO CRITICAL TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE
SUPPORTING THE WESTERN SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
AND WESTERN SYDNEY AEROTROPOLIS**

At Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney on Thursday 13 June 2024

The Committee met at 8:55 am

PRESENT

Ms Lynda Voltz (Chair)

Mr Nathan Hagarty (Deputy Chair)

Mrs Judy Hannan

Mr Warren Kirby

PRESENT VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Mr Ray Williams

The CHAIR: Before we start, I acknowledge the Gadigal people, who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet here at Parliament. I also pay my respects to the Elders, past and present, of the Eora nation and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are present or are viewing the proceedings online. Welcome to the second public hearing of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport and Infrastructure inquiry into critical transport infrastructure supporting the Western Sydney International Airport and Western Sydney Aerotropolis. We thank the witnesses who are appearing before the Committee today and the many stakeholders who have made written submissions. We appreciate your input into this inquiry.

The Hon. STUART AYRES, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Institute of Australia NSW, sworn and examined

The CHAIR: I welcome our first witness, the Hon. Stuart Ayres, from the Urban Development Institute of Australia NSW. Thank you for appearing before the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure today to give evidence. Can you please confirm that you have been issued with the inquiry terms of reference and information about the standing orders that relate to the examination of witnesses?

STUART AYRES: I can confirm.

The CHAIR: Do you have any questions about that information?

STUART AYRES: No, I'm fine.

The CHAIR: No, I didn't think so. Would you like to make a short opening statement before we begin questions?

STUART AYRES: I'll just make some brief opening remarks. The UDIA has made a submission to this inquiry. I think it might be worth recognising in these opening remarks the announcements made by the Government in the last 24 hours, particularly around the establishment of Infrastructure NSW as the coordinating authority for the provision of infrastructure in the aerotropolis and supporting the Western Sydney International Airport. The UDIA has made public statements supporting the Government's decision to strengthen the coordination functions of Infrastructure NSW. We think this will help with the better coordination of infrastructure into this particular location.

I think it's also worth recognising the changes that have been announced around the Western Parkland City Authority, with a more discrete focus and a new name as the Bradfield Delivery Authority. We'd like to put on the record that we congratulate and welcome Mr Ken Morrison as the new CEO of that organisation. It's obviously been some time without a permanent CEO; it's had an acting CEO. To be able to have some clear, direct leadership for that organisation is a welcome addition, and we recognise the work that the Government has done in being able to do that.

The final element of my opening remarks, before we can delve into questions, is merely to say that there's a strong level of foundational work that's been put into the aerotropolis. We can see that just by what's on the ground and the activity that takes place in this community. The Commonwealth and the State have been working together for a number of years for the establishment of a new Western Sydney International Airport—a substantial investment on behalf of the Commonwealth with a large degree of integration required at the State level.

There is, I think, the largest investment in rail infrastructure in the Commonwealth's history into the Western Sydney airport metro rail line, co-funded between the Commonwealth and the State. Substantial investments in road infrastructure have already taken place. The Northern Road, which has substantially changed travel times and the ability to access the aerotropolis and the airport precinct from both the north and the south, has been a significant investment. It builds on other road infrastructure like Camden Valley Way and Bringelly Road, as well as the M12, which is under construction. So there's a really strong, solid foundation around transport connectivity into this precinct. But this is one of the largest—if not the largest—singular economic precincts that exists in the country. It will require investment over many years—decades—between governments. It's a multigenerational investment that will deliver strong economic and social benefits for Western Sydney, New South Wales and the entire nation.

The CHAIR: You did mention the release yesterday on Infrastructure NSW, and that was your recommendation 9: that the New South Wales Government should create a whole-of-government delivery authority. It's been raised by the Committee a number of times about having an overarching, whole-of-government approach. Is this sufficient to answer those concerns?

STUART AYRES: Infrastructure NSW has a strong statutory position to be able to do this work. It's led by a strong executive team; I think Tom is going to be a witness at this hearing later in the day. We think that having clarity around the coordinating functions is critical. We also think that the provision that is available to Infrastructure NSW, should they require it, with step-in powers to be able to direct agencies around where they prioritise funding towards infrastructure, is absolutely critical. My expectation is that Infrastructure NSW would probably prefer to collaborate with other State agencies and do that work by way of agreement, but I think it's important that State agencies know that there is a step-in power that's supported by a strong legislative framework for Infrastructure NSW to do that. The Government's decision to make that Infrastructure NSW, as opposed to some other organisation within government, I don't think is a hugely relevant factor. What is most relevant is that there is clarity around who has that coordinating function.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: In the submission, the UDIA has called for a single coordination authority, and you've obviously welcomed yesterday's news. Implicit in that is a failure of the previous Government around the Western Parkland City Authority. In your organisation and your members, from their perspective, what does that failure mean in terms of job generation and getting the aerotropolis and the airport going?

STUART AYRES: I think the focus has to be about being able to generate investment into this particular precinct. There's already substantial public investment. There's substantial investment in infrastructure that has already taken place; in my opening remarks I referenced an \$11 billion metro rail line and the \$5 billion capital investment into the airport itself. Over \$4½ billion has been invested into road infrastructure, so I think it would be a mischaracterisation to suggest that there hasn't been coordination or infrastructure delivered into the aerotropolis.

In fact, if you think about from the time the Federal Government, which I think was led by Prime Minister Abbott when the airport was first announced in 2013-14—that amount of infrastructure delivered would probably represent something of a land speed record when it comes to planning and infrastructure delivery in New South Wales. There's a solid foundation there. What you need to do now is build on that. You need to build on that with the enabling infrastructure that allows land use to be brought to market. That's going to require a lot more enabling infrastructure, and it will obviously require additional infrastructure, in new transport infrastructure. It's probably best described at the sub-arterial level, and that's where the responsibilities for governments lie now.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Just a follow-up question. You mentioned the metro. In the previous hearings, we were out at Penrith and there was some questioning as to whether the right decision was made previously in regards to whether the north-south metro should have been prioritised over the Leppington extension. What's the view of the UDIA in relation to that?

STUART AYRES: As in whether a regional decision was the right decision?

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Yes.

STUART AYRES: I think the UDIA supports the fact that governments have invested \$11 billion into metro rail infrastructure. There's a gap that exists between Bradfield and Leppington that the UDIA has made in its submission and that, I'll emphasise in these hearings, should be closed at the earliest possible convenience. That would be a high priority for the State Government and I would encourage the Federal Government to continue to invest in rail infrastructure in the aerotropolis. It's not just a New South Wales or Western Sydney specific investment; it's a national investment. It creates much stronger connection to the airport and to the aerotropolis.

The south-west rail extension, if you're able to connect to that from Bradfield, opens up a connection via Glenfield, which really makes the airport and the aerotropolis precinct accessible to most Sydney rail lines that are on the southern half of the city. As is reflected in our submission—and as I suspect you will see in many other submissions to this inquiry—it should be a priority of the Government to close that gap between Bradfield and Leppington. As far as the decision to go from St Marys to Bradfield versus Leppington to Bradfield, I think what we're seeing now is a great opportunity to be able to leverage that existing rail line. I think it has set in place a pathway for future governments to be able to extend that rail line.

My expectation is that you will have submissions from other communities looking to extend those rail lines south, from Bradfield down to Macarthur, which connects critical communities like Narellan and Oran Park. At the same time, you will have strong advocacy around connecting north from St Marys through to Tallawong. What that will do—and what the original decision to put in place that rail line between St Marys and Bradfield has done—is set future governments on a path to ensure there's strong north-south rail connectivity across outer Western Sydney.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: You spoke about the benefits of closing that Leppington line and we have heard that in some of the submissions and at some of the hearings. It means that people in my neck of the woods—in Leppington, in Liverpool—will be able to get to the airport a bit easier. You've got that connection to Glenfield, which means Campbelltown and the Macarthur can get in, and of course you can get to the other airport pretty quickly. This Committee has been frustrated in the past about getting the business cases for these previous decisions. What's the UDIA's view? Do you think this Committee and the State in general would be enlightened by getting their hands on these business cases and working out why the decisions were made and who made what decision when and why the decision was made in order to forecast future transport decisions?

STUART AYRES: I think one provision that could be implemented is the summary business cases being published on the Infrastructure NSW website. They are an organisation that acts as an insurance body for the delivery of infrastructure. It has done that in the past with other forms of infrastructure. I think that's an important transparency mechanism that could be delivered into the future. I don't see that as a problem. I don't see a huge amount of value in large, complicated business cases being scrawled through as a mechanism for being

able to determine what you should do in the future. I think governments will always want to be able to protect the capacity and how they make those decisions. Some things should be protected by Cabinet in confidence, particularly for their own decision-making, not to mention the capacity to protect commercial interest as well. But I think the priority for this Committee is being able to determine how you build on the foundation that's already in place and what transport infrastructure needs to continue to be delivered on top of what's already been delivered.

The CHAIR: But isn't that one of the fundamental problems? You have a number of rail projects going on at the time and, even though you say the Federal Government has had the largest investment in rail in the airport metro, the cost of that metro, as it stands at the moment, pales to, say, Metro West, which sits at \$25 billion. You have \$11 billion for the St Marys to the airport link at the moment. Isn't there some consideration that should go into—particularly with greenfield sites, where, as we know, over time costs will increase when you're not building on a greenfield site—the opportunity cost of building other rail projects as opposed to the rail projects you're foregoing at that time? One of the concerns around the airport link is that here is where the jobs explosion and the population explosion is happening and without those links between Campbelltown, Liverpool and Penrith, it doesn't quite provide what other rail projects are providing.

STUART AYRES: I'm not sure that I agree with sentiment of that, if I could be direct, Ms Voltz. I think what's most important here is that there's rail connectivity to the aerotropolis and the airport across the entire arc of outer Western Sydney. The first section of that is between St Marys and Bradfield. It's critical that the link between Bradfield and Leppington is completed. It's important that, over time, a rail line that links the aerotropolis to Macarthur is also completed. There is obviously strong support for people and communities that are across the north-west to be able to connect to the North West Rail, which currently ends at Tallawong with the airport metro line interchange at St Marys.

It's not whether you choose one of those rail lines; you have to build all of them. That's a massive amount of commitment from the public that will have to be done over many years. It becomes a sequencing issue. We've already made the decision. You've got a rail line under construction from St Marys to the airport. The next question for the Government is which section they do next. We would strongly argue the most obvious one is to close the link between Bradfield and Leppington. As we've already said, that opens up connections to the southern part of the city. Governments today and into the future will have to decide which rail links they do and what order they do them in.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Mr Ayres, you've made a number of comments on the foundations that have been laid. We've heard from multiple witnesses that the transport links are a long way behind for the opening of the airport. Can you comment on whether there's been sufficient planning to address the projected jobs growth in Western Sydney and the flow-on demands for transport infrastructure?

STUART AYRES: I think what's in place at the moment is—I'll go back to my original remarks. I think the foundation is solid but there's plenty more work to do. You've got road and rail infrastructure that is in place. You've got over 11,000 hectares of land that's been rezoned, but to be able to bring that land to market you need to invest in the next level of road infrastructure. You'll hear from us in our submission, as well as many others, around other road infrastructure that now needs to be invested in. That road infrastructure is critical for opening up both employment lands and lands for residential communities. That's the challenge that exists for the Government that's in office today and the challenge that will be for governments that exist well into the future. So it's about building on what you've already got and making sure that you continue to do that.

I think the announcement around the coordinating function for Infrastructure NSW will help with that. Where there is contestability between agencies and contestability within an agency about whether a road should be invested in the aerotropolis or some other part of New South Wales, the coordinator general function of Infrastructure NSW will give the Government the step-in power to ensure that the Government gets the order of priority that they want.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: So should I take from that that you're confident that the transport links into the aerotropolis will be sufficient when the airport opens?

STUART AYRES: I do think they'll be functional; there's no doubt about that. The rail line is under construction so most builders that I know will try to build things as quickly as they possibly can so they can start the next job. That project will be completed. The M12 is under construction. That will provide direct road access into the airport. It's the next tier of roads down—Northern Road is completed—like Elizabeth Drive, Fifteenth Avenue, the capacity of Badgerys Creek Road and the Eastern Ring Road, which are all roads that are going to be important for land use in and around the aerotropolis. As far as early release areas like the Mamre Road precinct, which is already seeing substantial investment—that investment is now being held up by the lack of road infrastructure and enabling infrastructure in that precinct. You've got a solid foundation. You have to keep your foot on the accelerator and keep going.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS: Morning, Stu. I think we all agree that the overall success of both the aerotropolis and the airport precinct is fundamental to the public transport that's implemented and, as you've alluded to already, the rail line is well and truly underway. We've heard already from witnesses in this Committee that the growth of the south-west areas, particularly in relation to Camden, on behalf of the employment that is going to be necessary to service that particular area is largely going to be based on the success of the aerotropolis.

I agree with you 100 per cent that that rail line should be brought back online linking up the south-west areas. But in regard to your submission and your support for the rapid bus transit ways linking other areas, is that support for rapid bus based on those buses being in single-lane roads separate to the current road infrastructure that we're going to see? Or do you think that that is going to be achievable to get that public transport across Western Sydney back to the airport if those buses, which we understand at the moment are only going to be sitting on the normal roads at the moment, are faced with the day-to-day traffic that all commuters are sitting in?

STUART AYRES: Mr Williams, the first thing I'd say is that what we should be doing is be able to provide as much infrastructure as possible to support transport connectivity to the aerotropolis within the remit that is available to government. We know that it's going to be a challenge for a government to be able to invest the multiple billions of dollars required to build a rail line that would link Bradfield to Macarthur, for instance. What are the options that are available to the Government and to the public to improve public transport access to the aerotropolis? Rapid bus transit is one of those. By all means, if traffic modelling and the ability for transport officials to say the dedicated busways would improve travel times—I think that's a largely self-evident question. But if you've got capacity on existing roads, why wouldn't you use them first whilst you're building new infrastructure?

The aerotropolis is an intergenerational economic precinct. You will have to keep building on the work that has come before you. I think that, if there's capacity for rapid bus transit to take place on existing road infrastructure, that's an obvious thing for government to be able to do. But that capacity on those roads will be constrained over time as more people move into those locations, as more employment opportunities come in there. We do know the capacity to reserve corridors, whether it be for rapid bus transit or future rail corridors, does minimise the cost of that infrastructure into the future.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I was interested in the discussion of public transport versus roads, and you've just discussed that. We've all talked about what priorities should be north-south down to Leppington et cetera. What importance would you put on a master plan that prioritises the complete mapping of public transport to the new airport, be it as far as Wollongong, Newcastle, wherever? What would be the importance of having all the critical public transport prioritised in a master plan so that everybody knows where we're going?

STUART AYRES: I think strategic land use planning is a strong foundational principle for making good decisions on where to deploy scarce amounts of resources or government capital. You do have a number of strong foundational documents already. The existing strategic land use plans across the Western Parkland City provide for a strong indication around what transport is required. The transport 2050 plan, which looks at long-term transport connectivities across different precincts, identifies where those key corridors should be. I think the Committee would be well versed in looking at what is in those existing plans. If they do need to be updated, then I'm sure government can consider that. It will continually look to refine. But having a long-term view about where that strategic land use is going to be needed to be supported by infrastructure is critical.

I think a lot of that is already available, Ms Hannan, so you can look to do that. It really then becomes a question for government about how it then prioritises where it invests its infrastructure funding across the suite of options that are available. That's going to be contested and you want to be able to make sure that you're making sound decisions. I'm quite interested in the idea of a sector plan that was announced by the Government yesterday. That might well help with creating a greater amount of clarity around sequencing. That would definitely help UDIA members. If they understood the sequencing of infrastructure, that would definitely allow them to have greater certainty about where they deployed their capital when it comes to bringing development to bear on greenfield sites, whether that be for employment lands or for residential.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: The last question I have is everything is talked about in the Sydney Basin, and we all talk about the new airport and east of there. Do UDIA have any opinions of connectivity to the west of the airport?

STUART AYRES: I'll answer that in two ways. I think that the capacity for the airport to create stronger links into the south and the south-west—into the Illawarra—creates a really strong opportunity for future work around enhancing economic prosperity, and investing in economic-enabling infrastructure between the Illawarra and Port Kembla and that economic zone and what will be the emerging economic zone in and around the aerotropolis. That would have, I suspect, a significant impact on the community that you're privileged enough to

represent in this place given the movement of people, goods and services between the Illawarra, through the Wollondilly, parts of the Southern Highlands and into the south-west of Sydney.

I do think that there's some strong work coming out of councils like Wollongong council and the joint organisations of councils in that Illawarra and Shoalhaven area. That should definitely be part of the longer term strategic thinking. The reality of the airport, from a directly western movement, is it's bordered very closely by Nepean River and the Blue Mountains on the other side of the river, so there's probably not an obvious or logical opportunity to be able to create any direct transport there other than existing corridors. Those corridors are Great Western Highway and Bells Line of Road. Beyond that, you're heading south along the Hume Highway before you get around the mountain.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I was talking about the connectivity of the port.

STUART AYRES: Yes, I think that presents a very strong opportunity. We already know that there are some good corridors that exist there. The quality of the infrastructure to be able to support growth will need to be a focus for government. But, if you're thinking about the capacity of a port like Port Kembla and the economic activity it generates, and being able to create greater proximity and stronger transport connections to drive more activity between a port and an airport, that's a very logical and sensible school of thought.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: And the corridor has been protected through there.

The CHAIR: The rail corridor.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: I'd be interested to know what recommendations you hope that this Committee make.

STUART AYRES: We've made some recommendations in our submission. But I would say that a strong focus for the Committee should be around the next year of road infrastructure. If I was going to highlight some concerns, I have some concerns around the capacity of Elizabeth Drive to be able to continue to function in an effective and safe way as more and more activity comes online. We hear consistently from members and investors into the Mamre Road Precinct, which was an early-release precinct, that the road infrastructure around Mamre Road hasn't kept pace with the demand for capital to deploy into those locations. There have been road upgrades to Mamre Road, but they haven't kept pace with the demand.

I do welcome the recent funding allocations to continue to widen Mamre Road, but I understand that widening won't get all the way to Elizabeth Drive. That will create some bottlenecks and constraints, particularly for freight and logistics movements that are going to be coming out of the ever-increasing number of freight and logistics warehousing that is going into that Mamre Road Precinct. Mamre Road continues to be a priority for our members, and I know is a major priority for investors, so that should be a strong focal point: the natural connection point between Mamre Road and Elizabeth Drive.

The obvious point to make about the M12 is that it doesn't have any intersections. It creates a connection to the existing motorway network at M7. It creates a connection to the airport, and it creates a connection to the Northern Road. But land use north and south of the M12 won't be supported by the M12; it will only be supported by an upgraded Elizabeth Drive. So I think a strong focus for this Committee would be to make recommendations around continued and sustained investment in Elizabeth Drive. Additional intersections on a widened Elizabeth Drive will open up opportunities for employment lands to be developed north and south of Elizabeth Drive, and the same thing for residential opportunities as well.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: I'm glad you mentioned freight. There's a corridor preservation to Port Kembla, primarily, I would assume, for freight. There's been quite a lot of evidence come through to suggest that freight will be a major component of the airport. Do you perceive there to be adequate infrastructure—road or rail—to facilitate the movement of freight?

STUART AYRES: You will need to continue to invest in road and rail infrastructure to allow for more freight and logistics activity in Western Sydney. The current road network would not be able to handle substantial increases in freight and logistics warehousing without additional upgrades to roads infrastructure; Elizabeth Drive and Mamre Road are just present examples of that. There are literally millions of dollars ready to be deployed into landholdings along the Mamre Road corridor that cannot deploy because Mamre Road has not been widened or intersections on sub-arterial roads off Mamre Road are not built.

The CHAIR: Can I ask for clarification? The M12, which has the investment and is being built at the moment, joins the M7 and the Northern Road, I think it is, at the other end.

STUART AYRES: That's correct.

The CHAIR: What was the consideration at the time? Given that there's still no clarity on the airport as to whether it's going to be heavily freight, how many passengers will possibly be going through the terminal on any given day—it may be 10,000. There are no clear numbers. I think 10 million a year is the only figure anyone has. What was the consideration for doing the M12 infrastructure that joins the M7 and the Northern Road on who the movements were at that time as opposed to those freight movements that are coming out of warehouses around the Mamre Road precinct?

STUART AYRES: The M12 is a road that is substantially invested in by the Commonwealth and delivered by the State Government. There's not insignificant—but, as a percentage, there's a substantially lower percentage of State allocated funds in that. The priority of the M12 was to create motorway-grade access from the existing Sydney motorway network to the airport, to be able to provide road access to the airport. It does so by linking the M12 and the Northern Road with direct access to the new airport.

The CHAIR: But was the consideration for that because of freight movements or passenger movements, or was it just that that's going to be the link?

STUART AYRES: It's the primary road access in and out of the airport. There's no doubt about that. If you take the numbers that you've spoken about—and I think they're publicly accepted numbers—a 10 million pax airport puts Western Sydney airport on par with the Gold Coast Airport. So that gives you an immediate or a near-term reference point for traffic movements.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I understand that roads may seem to be cheaper, but when I look at major airports overseas—and, eventually, that's what this is aimed to be—they actually discourage roads into the airport, and they get the public transport systems in place. Because as soon as you've got roads going in, you come up with all these other transport congestion issues. I know what you've just said about roads and concentrating on roads. Do you see this as a good thing—to concentrate on roads—or should our efforts be going into making sure that we get a public transport system that makes people catch public transport to the new airport, right up-front, instead of that habit of getting the road system in place?

STUART AYRES: If dollar valuations are a reflection of priority, Ms Hannan, then the Government has already prioritised public transport heavily above road infrastructure. The investment in metro rail to the airport far outweighs the investment in road infrastructure to the airport and the aerotropolis. The continued investment in public transport and the high—if not the most important—priority in being able to close the Bradfield to Leppington gap would also be quite a substantial investment. We at the UDIA would support recommendations around continued rapid bus transit, particularly for communities that are not going to be serviced by metro rail in the foreseeable future. Rapid bus transit represents a sensible and sound interim solution until additional metro rail or rail access can be provided to those communities further to the south.

The CHAIR: Unfortunately we have run out of time. Thank you for attending today before the Committee. You will be provided with a copy of the transcript of today's proceedings for corrections. The Committee staff will also email any questions taken on notice from today and any supplementary questions from the Committee. We kindly ask you return answers to those within 14 days. Welcome back to the New South Wales Parliament.

STUART AYRES: It has been great to be here.

(The witness withdrew.)

Mr TOM GELLIBRAND, Chief Executive, Infrastructure NSW, sworn and examined

Mr SAID HIRSH, Head of Strategy, Planning and Innovation, Infrastructure NSW, affirmed and examined

The CHAIR: Good morning. Thank you for appearing before the Committee today. Can you please confirm you've been issued with the inquiry's terms of reference and information about the standing orders that relate to the examination of witnesses?

TOM GELLIBRAND: We have.

The CHAIR: Do you have any questions about this information?

TOM GELLIBRAND: No.

The CHAIR: Before we start, would you like to make a short opening statement?

TOM GELLIBRAND: If I may, that would be fantastic. Thanks for the opportunity to appear in front of the inquiry today. Infrastructure NSW has had a role in matters relating to the Western Sydney International Airport for some time. It was reviewed in terms of its strategic implications when we were developing the 2022 State Infrastructure Strategy and also the subsequent State infrastructure plan, which my colleague Said was heavily involved with. Most recently, as we all know, the Premier has made announcements about how he would like to see the provision of services and infrastructure coordinated in a better way to service the airport, the aerotropolis and, more so, Western Sydney. Subsequent to that, the Premier has issued a memorandum, which is available to people across the public sector and I think also publicly, which confirms those priorities and provides Infrastructure NSW with considerable authority to work with agencies and industry to make sure the aerotropolis is progressively serviced with infrastructure.

The Infrastructure NSW Act itself does expressly provide for a role called the Coordinator-General, which is a role that's associated with the chief executive position, and that specifically relates to that opportunity to better coordinate services and infrastructure with development. There are also other powers within the Infrastructure NSW Act which allow INSW to deliver projects directly on behalf of government as well. I think the work that we are now faced with in terms of our coordination role is exciting and will involve extensive collaboration with industry, stakeholders—especially those in Western Sydney—and government agencies within New South Wales. It's a role that we welcome and we're looking forward to.

The CHAIR: Just because you were here for that last session and you will have heard what Stuart Ayres was saying in regard to roads and freight movements, can I ask you a question in regard to the infrastructure and what is being built and where. So 10 million a year basically works out at 28,000 passengers per day. You have a rail link that's being built that only goes to St Marys, so you can assume Blue Mountains, Penrith, maybe people on the Parramatta line may use it. Then you've got the M12, which has no exits to the freight, and this is meant to be an airport with large freight capacity.

Elizabeth Drive has been a problem now—as far as I can remember, because I'm pretty old—since the 1980s. We're talking about a rapid bus transit network as the stopgap for a rail line that will be built to Leppington and Narellan and Campbelltown at some point in the future. How are these priorities being decided? Because you could kind of get the idea, particularly as I think there are only 2,500 car park spaces at the airport itself and another 4,000 in the business centre, about how these priorities were decided that you can put rapid transport in but we don't even have the links to the freight areas that are already existing on Mamre Road and the upgrades that are going on there.

TOM GELLIBRAND: I think it would be a good thing for the inquiry to look into how that demand at the airport will change over time. I am not privy to the modelling for patronage for the airport, but I suspect on day one it will be less than on day 100, which will be less than day 1,000. So it will ramp up over time. That's traditional on roads and all forms of public transport. On day one it's absolutely critical that people can get in and out. I would've thought that the most important thing on day one for the airport is that you can get vehicles in there that support the airport operations themselves. Trucks that can supply aviation fuel and all the basic services that you would need to run an airport, they'd be the most important things. All of those products and services will come via vehicles. They won't be transported by rail or by buses. The foundation infrastructure that you've been talking about most recently—the M12, the M7, the Northern Road—is absolutely critical for day one operations so the airport can start when people want it to start.

But the investment needs to continue. As the patronage goes up at the airport, there are only so many car spaces you can provide. You need to have alternatives available—so mass transit. The airport metro—the first stage from St Marys to the airport itself—will provide some public transport. There are other plans, as you were just discussing. To improve bus services from south-western Sydney into the airport as well is another one. Over

time, those services will need to be improved in terms of their frequency as well as their reach, and then they'll also need to be augmented by other services. The extent to which it needs to happen on day one is the question that's in everyone's mind. It will be served by a mass transit rail system, which is the Sydney Metro airport rail line. I would've thought that's an extraordinarily good place to start. It's not the end, though. I'm not necessarily saying that that's a good arrangement, but the provision of rail services to Sydney airport came considerably after it first commenced operations.

The CHAIR: Because it came so far afterwards, as we've seen in Tullamarine, the price becomes exponentially much greater. There's a huge difference between putting infrastructure in on a greenfield site as opposed to putting infrastructure into an existing airport. The figures I got from Perth were it was \$1.3 billion to build their rail, but if they had to go back and do it now it would be \$3 billion. So you're at least doubling your cost by building later on because you run into those problems.

TOM GELLIBRAND: Yes. I think your observation is extremely valuable. There are two dimensions to it, as I understand. The first one is escalation. The longer you leave it, the more expensive it becomes. So that's very true. The issue, therefore, with government is that government will always be interested in efficient expenditure—using taxpayers' money as efficiently as possible—but there's always a limit to how much is actually available in any one year. That's where you get into those priorities that you mentioned before. If we're constrained in terms of our capital, which arguably we always are, you have to work out, "Well, what do I need to spend my money on next?" The sequencing of infrastructure to the airport so far has been very sensible in terms of the large roads, the mass transit and then now looking at the public transport bus corridor through to south-western Sydney. They're all very sensible.

The second element to your observation which I think is also really pertinent is that if you're doing things in greenfield locations, it's a lot easier and a lot cheaper than if you're trying to do it in a brownfield location. When we're looking at places like the airport and the aerotropolis, it's incumbent upon planners, both transport and land use planners, to make sure that, as a minimum, the corridors are identified and preserved so that if you don't have all of the capital available on that day to start building the assets, at least you've preserved a space for the assets to go in, and then they can be progressively provided. That's an absolute must.

The CHAIR: Has that been done for the rail to Leppington and to Campbelltown?

TOM GELLIBRAND: I'm not exactly sure of the status of it, but I know those corridors have been identified. Whether or not they've commenced with property acquisitions or subdivisions to effect it, I don't know. That's a question that would be well answered by Transport for NSW. The corridors themselves have been identified.

The CHAIR: I forgot to mention one thing at the beginning. I need to inform you that you may wish to take questions on notice and provide the Committee with an answer in writing within 14 days. Feel free to take any question on notice, if you like.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Firstly, congratulations, Mr Gellibrand, on your expanded responsibilities.

The CHAIR: And Said. He's got more work.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: And Said. Hopefully you're a good delegator. I've got the media release here. I think that announcement will be welcome. We heard from the UDIA that it was a welcome announcement, judging by what we've seen in these submissions, that there is an authority that has come over the top and has a bit more power. One of the frustrations previously was that there were a lot of glossy brochures, strategies, planning documents and all of that stuff but not much delivery. You have come in now, and you have to strike that balance between getting things moving there and also making sure that there is a cohesive strategy or plan. It's day two. What is the first thing you guys are working on in terms of getting to that point and knowing what the priorities and the plan ahead is?

TOM GELLIBRAND: I think it's always a mistake to try to do everything all at once, but we need to do several things simultaneously. The concept of a sector plan—and that's not necessarily a purely defined document—is very important because it will identify what assets need to go in what location and, ideally, when they should be delivered. In developing a plan like that, we need to work with industry, we need to work with landowners and we need to work inside government. When we say "government", I'm not talking about local government; it's State government and Federal government as well. This is a nationally significant area, and there are a lot of interests. That sector plan is really important. Our plan is to have that before government before the end of the year.

Once that is confirmed, it provides you with the blueprint about what infrastructure is going in where and when. We haven't finished it yet, on day two, but I suspect it won't say everything everywhere all at once. There

will be a sensible staging associated with that, and that will represent efficient expenditure of taxpayers' money. It will also represent supporting where the demand is. You have heard, and I think you'll continue to hear, that there is pent-up demand for services in the Mamre Road area. There are DAs that have been approved, there are some that are on exhibition and there are some that are pending. That represents an enormous opportunity for people in Western Sydney, Greater Sydney and, to an extent, the prosperity of all of Australia, because the international airport will bring a lot of economic benefits to the country. That pent-up demand, it's in everyone's interests that we address that. What that means, in my mind, is that the investments in Mamre Road need to happen as quickly as they possibly can. How quick that is is something that we'll be looking to very early on.

One of the things that I'm also really interested in is looking at how much work needs to be done up-front for some of these investments. Whenever you build a road or a piece of infrastructure, you definitely need a well-considered, thought-out and practical design. It has got to work. You need to understand what land you're working on in terms of contamination, who owns it and if there's acquisition involved. You definitely need to know how much it is likely going to cost so that, when you go to market, you are an informed buyer. The extent to which we need to do more and more elaborate business cases is one of the areas that I really want to turn my attention to. I think the priorities that were announced by the Premier yesterday are very clear. This is a focus of the Federal Government, local government and State Government.

This is an international airport. It has significance for all of Western Sydney and, as I said before, the Australian economy, one way or another. As a consequence, these investments need to be made. The real challenge is working out which ones need to be done first, not whether or not they need to be made. They need to be made. One of the virtues of this part of Sydney is that the roads, as the Chair mentioned, have been around for a very long time. We're not talking about new roads where we have to work out where they go, how they work with the topography and how we cross creeks. They exist already, and they have for many years. It is a matter of upgrading those roads, in a sensible priority, to make sure that they support the progressive development of the airport.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: You mentioned elaborate business cases and upgrading existing roads. Fifteenth Avenue is one of those roads that keeps getting mentioned around the airport, and I know there are also roads in the member for Riverstone's electorate. We go in and ask about upgrading these roads, and we are told that the current process can take anywhere from eight to 12 years and involves elaborate business cases and designs. I wanted to parse that comment you made about elaborate business cases. Is there a view that we are perhaps overcooking the business case design process in lieu of actually getting stuff done, so there is too much planning and not enough delivery?

TOM GELLIBRAND: I share that concern. When you go into planning infrastructure and investing in infrastructure, you absolutely have to have your eyes wide open. You've got to be aware of all of the risks and what the costs are likely to be to the community, not just in dollar terms, but also in terms of disruption and ongoing neighbourhood impacts. You need to go into that with your eyes wide open. But if the Government has already made a commitment for a particular thing to happen, that can focus the business case right down.

If the decision has been made to invest in these key roads in the aerotropolis—you mentioned Fifteenth Avenue, the eastern link road and roads like that—the business case can be a lot more focused on saying, "Can the road be staged, and how much is it likely to cost? Do we understand all the risks associated with the geotechnical? Are we across what the environment is like in that area?" In some parts of Western Sydney you have to be very conscious of that because you might need to design your road in a particular way to stop koalas getting run over, impacts on streams and certain things. You need to be cognisant of all those very important things. The extent to which you need to do detailed benefit-cost ratios, look at a whole variety of options and come up with alternatives like the do-nothing option—if the decision has been made to upgrade the road, then I think that some of those things don't need as much attention as, perhaps, in other cases.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: That is good to hear.

SAID HIRSH: Perhaps to add as well, the issue when they take a long time is that, effectively, you are repeating work multiple times over. If you cost out a project and design it in year one or year two of the planning process and it takes a very long time to get a decision, then you are costing it probably three times more during the six or seven years of planning, which is not very useful—so, giving the Government an ability to make a decision earlier in the process. We have examples where we have got projects up from business case to decision-making pretty quickly—I think Metro Western Sydney airport, but I can't remember.

From the time the Government wanted to do the project and committed to it, and the further Government committed funds—and it is a very complicated project in comparison to a normal road project. It has tunnelling; it has electronic systems; it has multiple aspects of a project like that. But it went to a procurement process pretty quickly. So we can do it when we want to. That is the key thing, that we don't get things lingering on. That frustrates communities and it frustrates other agencies that are doing work to support a certain outcome. That will

be probably a key role we will play through this coordination function, being able to—where the Government is going to do something where it is interdependent and interfaces with others, whether it is land use outcomes or other agency work. That's going to be quite fundamental to getting this to work well.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Is it within your agency's remit to take the learnings from, for example, that metro project? So you can go from government announcement to shovels in the ground and push that throughout the bureaucracy to say, "Here is a great example of how we can get moving quickly. Transport, roads, schools, hospitals, here are some key learnings on how we can go from go to whoa pretty quickly." Is that in your remit and are you doing it?

SAID HIRSH: Yes. We will have to clearly work very closely with NSW Treasury because they own the business case process and the decision-making. We will definitely work collaboratively with Treasury and with our own assurance function so that that kind of speeding up is not really compromising quality decision-making or robust decision-making. That's where we need to balance out.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: There has been quite a bit of talk about getting in and out on the major roads, and about the major projects. What's the New South Wales Government doing to minimise the impact of the airport and aerotropolis on local road congestion in the region?

TOM GELLIBRAND: I would have to take that on notice, but I'm not sure if I could answer it in a short time, anyway. Transport for NSW would have an idea of that because they have traffic models across Sydney, and those traffic models are progressively updated as new roads come on stream. I think, anecdotally, it's reasonable to assume that when the airport is in operation it will create demand. People will want to get access to it for employment, to utilise the flight services or to go to work in the general area because you've got the associated development occurring. Some of those people will come from eastern Sydney via the M12 and M7 and some might come from Leppington via some of the local roads that I think you're referring to. As that demand grows, there will be competition for that road space and there will be subsequent need to augment some of those roads.

Again, over time agencies need to look at those impacts and plan their assets accordingly. We've been talking about transport here. Critical to the ongoing development of all areas is the supply of water and wastewater services, which Sydney Water is responsible for. When they build their assets, they will build them incrementally. They will build a foundation. They will buy all the land they need, generally, and then they will have some foundation element to it that can then be augmented, quite often on a compartmentalised basis. That's the sensible way of going about providing services because, as the demand increases, they can put on another part of the wastewater treatment plant, or they can duplicate the pumping station for the supply and reticulation of water.

Roads are similar. You could build them all in one day, but you'd probably be overinvesting for a long period of time. Many roads get built in a configuration and then they are subsequently augmented as the demand increases. That can be disruptive, but sometimes that's all we can do with the amount of capital that's available. That's often a decision of government: Do we have enough money to build this in its ultimate configuration? If not, can we get away with just doing the first two or four lanes and then come back later on?

The CHAIR: Unfortunately we are not the Western Australian Government, so we don't have an unlimited pot.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Do you have any estimates of how many flight movements, particularly outbound flight movements, there will be after the first year?

TOM GELLIBRAND: I certainly don't. Those forecasts would be available, though, from the Federal Government, I would expect.

SAID HIRSH: Yes, we can get that, but we don't have it with us.

The CHAIR: If you could take it on notice, that would be great.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I don't think using Sydney Water as an example, and their augmenting as demand comes in place, is a very good thing to do. I have communities out there with hundreds of houses with no sewer, and I don't think that's appropriate. I don't think we want a new airport that doesn't have a transport system as people are requiring. I am gobsmacked that you're not privy to the patronage of the airport. I think that would have to be critical to knowing what infrastructure you're going to have to have. I'm concerned about the siloing of different departments not sharing the information.

The other question—and I will give them both to you at once. I obviously come from the south-west area of Sydney. We are talking about planes taking off in 2026. There is minimal progress to show how those people are going to connect to the airport. At the moment I see that the north and the east have the priority connections,

when those communities are the ones that are sitting there begging for the jobs. Are all the jobs going to be taken by the north and the east before we actually get good connections? How, by 2026, are those growing communities going to get connection? That and the patronage details are my two questions.

SAID HIRSH: Perhaps a correction—nobody has withheld information from us about patronage of the airport. We just haven't got it from last night when the announcement was made.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: Fair enough.

SAID HIRSH: It has been provided to us in previous work, so nobody is holding any information—just to correct that. We just don't have it with us at the moment. We hadn't requested it when the announcement was made last night. We've got a lot of information coming in to work on preparing the sector plan and so on, and nobody has withheld any information from us, just to be clear.

TOM GELLIBRAND: I think your observation is correct. If you look at the current investments in roads, there are great opportunities if you're in the east to get into the airport via the M12-M7 arrangement. There are great opportunities if you're in the north, to an extent along Richmond Road and other roads to come south. Also, if you're in the west, in the Penrith area, you can actually take the western railway line, connect at St Marys and come into the airport. I think, from a west, a north and an east point of view, the proposed infrastructure that will be available in and around when the airport opens is better than what currently exists in south-western Sydney. There are roads that exist that enable you to get from south-western Sydney towards and into that aerotropolis and airport area, including The Northern Road, which will provide a lot of utility. Obviously, that's on the western side of the airport, but more needs to be done.

Part of our role is to work out where the demand is coming from and which roads need to be upgraded next. You've already heard and you'll continue to hear that Mamre Road is a real priority. I don't think that helps a great deal for the south-west. That helps with getting development underway, getting jobs in that area and supporting the freight and logistics role of the airport. You'll hear more about that as being a priority. From everything I have heard in the last 48 hours, I think it is a priority. But there's more than one priority, so I think there needs to be significant attention given to accommodating movements from the developing areas of Oran Park, Austral and the southern parts of Liverpool across from Camden and how those areas will get to enjoy the services and employment of the airport. I think that needs to be a real focus.

SAID HIRSH: More broadly as well, because we also have a role in the housing infrastructure space—it's not just the employment support for the aerotropolis. We cannot look at these two things in isolated ways because, whatever kind of infrastructure, it is not just providing services for employment to the airport or patronage of the airport, but we are looking at it as well from the context of servicing existing communities. As you mentioned, it is not good to have communities that have had development but haven't had the services, whether sewer, water, schools or whatever it is. We just don't see these things as two isolated—infrastructure serves spatial geographies and it serves multiple purposes. We will be looking at it from that perspective as well.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I guess it is the pent-up anger of not having any of those other services and then not having the accessibility that is the issue.

The CHAIR: Can I go back to movements as well. Once you get to a certain point, movements start being north-south across Sydney rather than east-west. Yet much of our infrastructure—even here with the airport you're seeing it—is being built east-west: The M12 is an east-west link and the rail link takes you to the western line through to the city. As we know, patronage has fallen on that line as opposed to the south-west line where patronage has actually increased because the links are between Liverpool and Parramatta, Campbelltown and Penrith. None of the infrastructure is being built for the way Sydney actually moves. Have you got ideas about that? Linking the M12 to the M7, which is only a two-lane freeway that is, quite frankly, a parking lot half of the time, seems a strange way of dealing with the transport coming in and out.

TOM GELLIBRAND: I'd agree with your observation that to effectively service areas you need east-west and north-south movement opportunities. With respect to the metro, that is the plan and I'm aware that the Commonwealth Government, the State Government, I'm not sure of the proportion of spending, have decided to invest in further analysis of extending—the option is to extend the metro south, down to Leppington, as well as north through to where the current metro stops at Tallawong in the city of Blacktown. If that was to occur, when the money becomes available, that would provide a great opportunity for giving a larger number of people access to the airport. And when you've got that extension of, for instance, the Sydney Metro, your new buses can actually then feed into stations at Leppington or at Bradfield or at Tallawong or at St Marys, and people can get on the railway line there. So you don't even have to have all the buses going all the way into the airport.

The CHAIR: Where is the efficacy and the rapid transport on a congested road network that we know is already struggling, as opposed to having those rail links? I assume that's the kind of dilemma you'll be looking at in terms of where you prioritise your infrastructure.

TOM GELLIBRAND: Yes.

SAID HIRSH: It's just generally, I think, not just in Sydney or specific to Australia. That's always been a problem in a well-developed city, that infrastructure follows, effectively. We have patterns where we have the Sydney CBD, where a lot of the employment and traffic generation happens and infrastructure keeps trying to catch up to service that, where you have less capital to service new emerging routes. That's kind of the dilemmas we have to grapple with.

The CHAIR: Yes. You have Westmead with a station. You then have a light rail going into Westmead, which is new infrastructure. You then have Sydney Metro West going into Westmead. So there are three transport routes coming into one. That is three. Meanwhile, there is nothing going across that—anyway, we're running out of time.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Can I just add one on notice? On notice, can I get an estimate of how many fuel trucks will be going in with aviation fuel in lieu of there being a pipeline? A rough, back-of-the-envelope calculation suggests there will be at least 100 trucks carrying 40,000 litres of fuel per day going into that airport. I am curious to know how many trucks are needed to service the flights.

The CHAIR: And where they're coming from.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: And who is driving them.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: The next witness might be able to answer that.

The CHAIR: The next witness might be able to help us with that. Thank you very much. Sorry, we have run over time. We could have kept you for another hour or two, I suspect. You're probably happy to get away from us. Thank you for appearing before the Committee. You will be provided with a copy of the transcript of today's proceedings for corrections. The Committee staff will also email any questions taken on notice from today and any supplementary questions from the Committee. We kindly ask that you return answers within 14 days.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

Mr DANIEL PERIC, Research and Policy Official, Transport Workers' Union of New South Wales, affirmed and examined

Mr RICHARD OLSEN, State Secretary, Transport Workers' Union of New South Wales, affirmed and examined

The CHAIR: I welcome our next witnesses, from the Transport Workers' Union. Thank you for appearing before the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure today to give evidence. Can you please confirm that you have been issued with the inquiry's terms of reference and information about the standing orders that relate to the examination of witnesses?

RICHARD OLSEN: Yes, we have.

The CHAIR: Do you have any questions about this information?

RICHARD OLSEN: No.

The CHAIR: Would you like to make a short opening statement?

RICHARD OLSEN: Thank you, Chair. My name is Richard Olsen. I am State Secretary of the Transport Workers' Union of New South Wales. Today I am joined by our research and policy adviser, Daniel Peric. To begin, I thank the Committee for providing us the opportunity to speak at this hearing. We believe this inquiry is a necessary step forward in preparing the Western Sydney airport and aerotropolis, in the context of both public transport and road transport. The topic of transport infrastructure seems to be squarely focused on the benefit of passengers and network operations. Though the TWU acknowledges the importance of addressing these matters, we also believe the idea of transport infrastructure must include considerations towards transport workers, who are operating the vehicles and services in question.

The TWU's submission raises a number of topics for consideration, primarily, the context for both buses and road transport operations and, subsequently, the need for workers who are committed to those critical tasks. As highlighted, there is a need for a proactive action when it comes to the facilities and amenities available for bus drivers working the routes to and from the Western Sydney International Airport and related precincts. Similarly, truck drivers must be afforded the same considerations when it comes to facilities available to them, particularly in the airport, where we will have aircraft fuel carted by trucks as opposed to dedicated fuel lines.

A major suggestion in TWU's submission is for the New South Wales Government to establish an ongoing consultation between the TWU and other related parties so that we make sure that transport infrastructure is done right from the onset. We would again highlight the importance of this point given our longstanding representation of members in this industry. The TWU has a unique understanding of the needs of transport workers and would support the Government in ensuring the outcome is fit for purpose.

Chair, there are just a few other matters that we'd also highlight in our opening submission. This airport should prioritise public transport and discourage the use of the likes of passenger ride-on, such as Uber and other identities. New South Wales bus drivers, in particular, should also be looked at as being critical to the success of this airport. As such, unfortunately, we sit before you with New South Wales bus drivers the lowest paid bus drivers in Australia—and we wonder why we can't get any. It's critical that we have the best of the best manning our buses heading towards 2026 and the opening of this international airport.

Further, as I'm sure has already been mentioned in this forum, is the essential services such as fuel not having a dedicated lane in the usage of transportation of fuel. It would be a great shame to see day two come along and there is no fuel left in the tanks at the Sydney airport, and we're waiting for a truck that's sitting behind three kilometres of traffic. We need to have dedicated lane works in association with the buses to ensure that this critical service is delivered on time and every time, 24 hours a day. Thank you, Chair.

The CHAIR: I have just a couple of questions, mainly around the fuel. You mentioned a dedicated lane for the fuel trucks. The indications we've got is that up to 100 fuel trucks a day would be needed for the airport. Where are they coming from to get there? The other thing you raised in your submission is what is happening with marshalling areas and safety zones and truck waiting areas. That's something that quite often doesn't get consideration. Have there been consultations in regards to that?

RICHARD OLSEN: We haven't had any great consultation with State Government or other stakeholders in relation to those matters. I think there is a guesstimate, for example, on the truck issue that there might be 100 trucks servicing the Sydney airport on a daily basis. That would vary, I would imagine, and it would certainly go spiralling upwards as patronage and airlines go out into the Sydney airport and start operating to full capacity. I think 100 is a very low number, and I think that you will find, from what we hear—I certainly don't

have any other evidence than what other people in the industry are telling us—that 100 is a low number, and it would be probably more to service that area.

Together with that—of course, that's going to possibly be a 24-hour operation, seven days a week—we need marshalling areas; we need proper amenities. We need places where truck drivers can facilitate their fatigue breaks. They are required by law to take breaks away from the steering wheel. We don't want to see accidents, we don't want to see incidents on our roads and we definitely don't want to see deaths on our roads. Therefore, having those things in place and ensuring that truck drivers and bus drivers are as safe as possible, are free from fatigue and have proper amenities in 2026 and beyond are paramount to us. That is the basis, as you say, of our submissions here today.

The CHAIR: Daniel, maybe you can take this on notice. For a Boeing, for example, how many fuel trucks do you need to fuel up an aircraft that's going on an international flight? You probably don't have those figures with you, but that would give us an indication, based on flights, what the fuel trucks were doing in terms of capacity.

DANIEL PERIC: Yes, that's something we'll take on notice.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: We'll stay on the trucks for now. You mentioned the fuel line. There'll be a lot of freight going in and out of there 24 hours a day, so quite a few trucks. Obviously, the community is concerned about more trucks on the roads in Western Sydney, and you've spoken about how we can mitigate that. One of the suggestions that came through in the previous hearing was that perhaps the truck movements could happen at night-time hours, outside of peak. I wanted to get your view, and what you think your members' views would be, if there was some kind of reverse curfew placed on truck movements.

RICHARD OLSEN: We would certainly facilitate whichever way is going to occur. If there's going to be night driving, as such, there's a limitation on that in as far as logbook hours are concerned and driving hours are concerned. That may facilitate more trucks having to be on the road because drivers can't do as many hours in as many days in any one week or fortnight as a result, but it's horses for courses. We believe that whichever way it's demonstrated is the best way to perform the task is the way in which we will do it and facilitate it.

If it is night work, there are obviously impediments to that as far as productivity and costs are concerned. But the employers, I'm sure, who will sit here before you over the next day or so will highlight those to you. But there are other factors that would come into place if that was to occur. I'm not sure about the holdings of the new airport or how many litres it could hold. If we only do maybe eight or 12 hours a day of deliveries, is there enough storage at the airport for it to be able to facilitate the further 12 hours where there are no fuel deliveries? Because we don't want to see what happened in Perth some weeks ago happen at our new airport.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Your submission states:

Despite such a significant level of patronage—

and, indeed, we've heard from a number of witnesses about the reliance on bus services into and out of the airport—

buses are afforded (up to) a mere 3% of the transport budget spend, in comparison to other modes of public transport.

In your view, how has that affected the quality of bus services for the upcoming airport and, more broadly, throughout Western Sydney?

RICHARD OLSEN: I think we are the very poor cousin when it comes to budgetary spend on transport. A lot seems to go to rail rather than the bus services. Bus services, as I understand it, carry—possibly more than 40 per cent of all patronage does get delivered on the bus services. Yet the budgetary spend on that is only, as you say, around 3 per cent, which is very disproportionate. It affects us greatly. It has affected both the quality of bus services over the years and the terms and conditions of bus drivers; hence, we find ourselves in the position that we're in. Bearing in mind that will all change, hopefully, on Tuesday night. I'm confident our Treasurer will see it differently—hopefully.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Just a follow-up to that, particularly in regard to bus services but also to the truck drivers. To your knowledge, when you talk about amenities, I assume that you're also talking about toilet facilities—

RICHARD OLSEN: Of course.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: —and other things like that for drivers to have a break.

RICHARD OLSEN: Yes.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Is there adequate infrastructure being put in place at the aerotropolis, more broadly, to facilitate both truck and bus drivers?

RICHARD OLSEN: I'm not aware of what happens there.

DANIEL PERIC: The TWU hasn't necessarily been consulted on what's actually going on in these precincts. One of our suggestions in the submission is that we are engaged to represent our members, to ensure everything is fit for purpose from the onset. We aren't aware of what's happening in that space. We would like to be.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: There's been no consultation with you to ensure that that's adequate?

DANIEL PERIC: No, and it's a longstanding issue in this industry, where bus drivers don't have access to suitable facilities and amenities on various different fronts. That's why it's a key focus in our submission.

RICHARD OLSEN: It's hugely important to us, as Daniel has said. As you would be aware, and others in this Committee would be aware, we have been running a campaign in the bus industry for quite some time called "Driving to Respect" for bus drivers. Our bus drivers, in certain areas, take bottles with them to work—and it isn't to drink water. We wouldn't like to see that occur; hence, our submission here today concentrates on the implementation of proper facilities, world-class facilities, ensuring we have access to toilets 24/7, proper lunch rooms, air conditioning and to be able to have a decent meal, as we are on the road for 12 to 14 hours per day. It's important for their wellbeing and for their health and safety—for themselves, passengers and the general public—that we are provided those facilities.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Where has that been done well? Is it the Government that provides these facilities when it's done well, or is it the private sector, or is it a combination of both? Are there any examples we can look to and say, "Here's some world-class facilities for truck and bus drivers that we want at the airport."

RICHARD OLSEN: The Bus Industry Taskforce did commence that work through a different body, looking at amenities, and has been looking at railway stations and improving the opportunities of where they can improve upon the facilities and toilets and the issuing of Opal cards. As you might be aware, the transport Minister released last year giving access to bus drivers to go into railway stations and utilise that. That isn't the optimum, of course, but it's a good stopgap.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: My questions were going to relate to how much consultation you've had. You've answered that question. It's vital that you guys are in on the discussions as they are going forward with Infrastructure. I suspect that your members would have a really clear understanding of where the traffic issues are. They probably know the better routes or where the money should be spent. I'm wondering how we get Infrastructure to talk to your members, who are on the ground. They're not sitting there doing a computer study. They're on the ground, already travelling those areas. What would your thoughts on that be?

RICHARD OLSEN: I think we highlight that in our submission, as well, and we thank you for your question. It is very important to us that both us as a union representing all bus drivers but also our delegates and worker representatives are at the table to tell firsthand about what goes on on our roads. We all know what happens on our roads: There are parking lots. But there are better ways in which we can move people around, and the bus drivers, of course, would know where that would be.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I think, for the 24/7 issue, we perhaps need to look at other airports that have 24/7 with truck and freight going in to see how they handle looking after the people that are driving those trucks and buses, because this is going to be a 24/7.

The CHAIR: I want to ask a quick question on freight movements and get your views. We have Port Botany, where a lot of freight is coming in at the moment. You've got the movements from there. You've got the Mamre Road, with a lot of the freight infrastructure around there as you do around the places like Silverwater. We've got the M12 connection. The M7—which is the main connection from the east to west, with people coming in from the M4 or from the M5—is already at capacity. Do you have a view about where the priorities should be in terms of freight movements?

RICHARD OLSEN: I think, if you have a look at Port Botany, it's a real basket case as far as transport is concerned. It's very difficult to get in and out. It's difficult to have any form of real rest and/or marshalling area. I think there are one or two marshalling areas, with the second one being redeveloped now. There are a lot of issues in relation to Port Botany and how that is actually managed. How will that be managed out in the new area, where both the M5 and M7 will connect into—I guess, it would go that way—the M12? It's only two lanes, as I understand it. That's going to cause significant issues for freight movement. It's going to certainly delay freight movement significantly. With the amount of traffic that's already on the M7, we can only expect that to be

increasing as the new airport comes online. In doing so, there are going to be quite a number of transport needs required by the new airport.

The CHAIR: But there won't be movement necessarily between Port Botany and the new airport, I suspect. The kind of freight you are getting in and out of the new airport will be smaller niche items. The difference between air freight and sea freight would be significant.

RICHARD OLSEN: True. Of course.

The CHAIR: In terms of the freight movements coming in and out, where your trucks are moving at the moment, and the difference between heading towards Port Botany, where, at the moment, you can get on the M4 and the extension kind of brings you out basically there, that's not going to be the case when you are coming around to the new airport.

RICHARD OLSEN: No. I think a lot of the companies have set up in and about Wallgrove Road, Minchinbury and St Marys, along that corridor of the M7-M4, and in that area. The big transport companies and air freight companies are all situated in there. They will go from there and I presume down the M7 also and down to the M12 and into the airport from that line. There will be a lot of air freight movements from there. There will be, again, quite a few trucks. Whether it be B-doubles or rigids is yet to be seen, but there certainly will be quite a bit of traffic heading from the M4 area down into the M12 and onto the airport.

The CHAIR: One of the points Infrastructure made earlier was that the M12 itself doesn't have any ability or capacity for those warehousing areas to get straight on there. It's also difficult with the M7. Either from the M4 exit or the M5 exit, once you pass those two there's no dedicated lane. You have a lot of freight pulling out onto the M7, which is a very difficult spot to get out. Is there a view from the union about how to improve those freight movements?

RICHARD OLSEN: Add another lane.

The CHAIR: On the M7?

RICHARD OLSEN: Yes. I know that the road Minister is looking at putting in a rest area there for trucks, in and about the junction of M7-M12. We're certainly hopeful that that will come about. That has been on the drawing cards for a couple of years. I don't think a final decision has been made. But, with that, we know from experience on the M7 that two lanes either way doesn't work. It only becomes a car park. The answer has got to be that we have to find the money and build a third laneway and dedicate it to trucks.

The CHAIR: Because at the moment with the M7—the way it is people aren't going to go on the M12 because they can't get on the M7 so they'll use the back roads.

RICHARD OLSEN: Very true. In usage to that we've got to remind ourselves also that the cost of tolls is totally outrageous in utilising them. Try to work out that from the M5, M7, M12—whichever. Doing that on the return trip is probably going to cost you a significant amount of money out of your budget each and every week for a private consumer.

The CHAIR: So you'll end up with what you see at the Church Street exit of the M4 where everybody backs up to get off where the toll starts.

RICHARD OLSEN: Absolutely. Of course.

The CHAIR: So if you're going to Sydney Markets, you're coming up Parramatta Road.

RICHARD OLSEN: We're still waiting on the decision on the toll roads and what should happen to that by Professor Allan Fels and others so hopefully there will be some alleviation of—a movement towards making the costs of travelling on our roads a lot fairer than what they are currently.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Just on buses, you say in your submission that buses received 3 per cent of the transport budget despite making up a significant amount of the patronage. I'm a bus lover myself. I used to catch the bus to and from—hey, guys in the back—work before coming into this place. T-way was a great example when it was initially started. Unfortunately the previous Government effectively didn't put the kind of investment it needed. The Government put out a plan recently around looking at buses and having five tiers of bus services—signal prioritisation, bus lanes. I want to get your thoughts on that and on getting Sydney to love buses again. I'm sure many people do—but getting more people to love buses again.

RICHARD OLSEN: I'm sure that my answer will be supplemented by the people behind me by the sound of it. I can't see them but I can assume that they're there. We all love our buses and we need to make our buses great again. There's no doubt about that. We need to do whatever we can do.

The CHAIR: That's a slogan we haven't heard for a while. Make our buses great again.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Get a cap.

RICHARD OLSEN: The bus taskforce did make certain recommendations, if that's what you're referring to. We're wholeheartedly supportive of that approach. We need to make it more efficient. We need to ensure our services are 100 per cent. Again, we go back to the question of we also need to attract the very best of drivers into that, and that means they need a pay increase—sooner rather than later, Matt.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: Can I just ask—you said Port Botany is a basket case. A lot of energy talks about shifting freight between the port and the airports and things like that. Do you think our concentration should be on Port Botany or should we be starting to think about the Illawarra connection to the new airport for freight?

RICHARD OLSEN: The Illawarra would be a great addition to it. I think there was a Maldon-Dombarton project. I think I was there at that time back in the '80s with Bob Carr releasing that—"Yes, we're going to do this." It's now 2024 and maybe it's time that it gets built. To provide that extra additional service to the airport from the Illawarra would be a great addition.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Just very briefly—because I'm conscious of time—there's been a lot of talk about the rapid bus transport in and out of the airport. To your knowledge, are there any interchanges outside of the airport precinct to support where the buses are going to?

RICHARD OLSEN: Not to my knowledge, no. I haven't had any discussion about that but I think that question should be asked at the next hearing. They might have a better indication of that than I.

The CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee today. You'll be provided a copy of the transcript of today's proceedings for corrections. The Committee staff will also email any questions taken on notice from today and any supplementary questions from the Committee. We kindly ask that you return these answers within 14 days.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

Mr MATT THRELKELD, Executive Director, BusNSW, affirmed and examined

Mr JOHN KING, President, BusNSW, affirmed and examined

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: I note that the Chair has stepped out for a bit of a break. I welcome our next witnesses. Thank you for appearing before the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure today to give evidence. Can you both confirm that you have been issued with the inquiry terms of reference and information about the standing orders that relate to the examination of witnesses?

MATT THRELKELD: Yes.

JOHN KING: Yes.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Do you have any questions about this information?

MATT THRELKELD: No.

JOHN KING: No.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Would you like to make a short opening statement before we begin with the questions?

MATT THRELKELD: Good morning, I'm the executive director at BusNSW. I'm joined here by the president of the association, Mr John King. BusNSW is the peak body for the New South Wales bus and coach industry and represents government-contracted and non-contracted bus and coach operators across New South Wales. BusNSW's mission is to foster efficient and sustainable growth of public transport in New South Wales, and to promote the benefits of bus and coach travel. Buses play a vital role in delivering public transport in New South Wales and during the 2021-22 financial year provided approximately 44 per cent of total public transport trips. In the same period, funding for bus services accounted for around 15 per cent of New South Wales Government expenditure on operating public transport.

We note that bus services are due to start before the Western Sydney International Airport opens in 2026 to provide public transport to the precinct. We acknowledge that Transport for NSW is planning for more services to be introduced as part of a rapid bus network in the future. It is important that the proposed rapid bus services are supported by dedicated bus lanes, priority signalling and modern stations. BusNSW also recognises that new bus interchanges and layovers will be built at Bradfield City Centre and Western Sydney airport and that they are for Transport for NSW contracted buses providing regular passenger services. We would like to highlight the need for those two layovers to incorporate modern amenities for bus drivers that include a rest area, toilets and meal preparation facilities.

In addition to supporting regular passenger services contracted by Transport for NSW, it is essential that the new Western Sydney airport also has adequate infrastructure for buses and coaches providing long-distance, tourist and charter services to and from the airport. This will allow accredited operators to seamlessly transfer visitors between the airport and destinations such as hotels, tourist attractions and regional centres. Such infrastructure should include a bus and coach layover with driver facilities and a world-class interchange that includes waiting areas, rest rooms, customer service counters and passenger information displays. This should also be a key priority for the New South Wales Government's visitor economy strategy.

Given the important role that buses play in replacing other modes when they are out of service, we would also like to emphasise the need for the six new metro stations between St Marys and Bradfield to have road and passenger infrastructure to support the operation of temporary bus services to replace Sydney Metro services when maintenance is required or due to unplanned events. We look forward to continuing consultation with the bus industry on this important topic and we thank the Committee for the opportunity to participate in the inquiry. We're happy to take some questions.

The CHAIR: I forgot to tell you that you may wish to take a question on notice and provide the Committee with an answer in writing within 14 days after receiving the question.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: We heard in the previous hearings, especially from the councils, there was some criticism of the fact that the bus services on day one won't be 24 hours. I think it's something like five to 11 or five to nine.

MATT THRELKELD: Five to 10, I think it is.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Given it's a 24-hour airport, there will be a fair few shift workers, many of them coming from Western Sydney, and we do want to discourage passenger vehicles. Do you have any thoughts on that and whether that should probably be reconsidered?

MATT THRELKELD: We haven't seen the modelling, but certainly understand that Transport for NSW has undertaken some modelling to consider the demand for those services at the commencement. And, obviously, it's been in the public domain that the intent is to build on that as we do see growth for those particular services. I think it's probably a matter for Transport for NSW at this point in time. But, certainly, frequency is obviously important in terms of building patronage, so that's something that we support. We'd like to see it ramped up into a rapid bus service as quickly as possible, noting that we do need to have the infrastructure that I mentioned in the opening statement to support that in terms of bus-only lanes and signalling et cetera. John may wish to add to that.

JOHN KING: Just to enforce that we really need the overall infrastructure to run 24 hours a day. It will be put on demand as a sense of the overall product that, if an airport closes at 10 o'clock at night—as it does in Sydney at the moment—or 11, 12 o'clock, then the infrastructure then gets wound down until the next morning. I think we're probably looking that we would rather see high-frequency services to start off with when the passengers are there, and the movement of community, and ramp that through as the demand requires further services.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: One of the other points that has come up in the submissions is the idea that these bus services need to be up and running prior to the airport opening so that people know that's how they get there on day one. If they're not ready and people drive there on day one, it's going to be very hard to get them out of that habit. Do you have any view on what's an appropriate time frame, where it's worked well or how long they should be up and running prior to the airport opening?

MATT THRELKELD: I think we'd need to understand all of the circumstances around that. But, certainly, when you consider the amount of construction that's going on at the moment and the workforce involved there, there would be some demand already. Obviously, the window between now and the opening is closing. It's probably then a matter of how many months prior. But I think, if you look at the planning needed for those services—the recruitment of the drivers, looking at the zero-emission buses that need to be manufactured—certainly, in general terms, a few months out. But we may need to take that on notice and come back to you where we can do some further research around some of the other circumstances that may impact that timeline.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: You mentioned the electric buses. Where do you think the charging infrastructure is at the moment, and are you confident it will be there day one? What else could the Government and industry do to ensure that there are adequate charging facilities?

MATT THRELKELD: In terms of the number of buses involved, we would be reasonably confident. Our understanding is that the services that we're talking about here, in relation to servicing the airport, will be delivered by the existing operators in those particular regions. At the moment, we understand there's some work going around depot capacities and being able to add that additional fleet into those existing depots to be able to commence the services in 2026. That's meaning there's a need to have that charging infrastructure in those depots available at that time. We're confident that that can be achieved. Obviously for the Government there's a need to ensure that Transport for NSW is working with those operators to ensure that infrastructure is up and ready to go.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: My question is around the interchanges. In your submission you suggested the development of integrated transport hubs. I'm particularly curious about where it interchanges outside of the aerotropolis. There's been a lot of questions focused on putting rapid transport links in, but I haven't seen anything about how they interchange and how they connect to their end points.

MATT THRELKELD: Yes.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Could you provide your opinion on where they should be and how they should be implemented?

MATT THRELKELD: At this point I'm not sure that there's a need for additional layover at those end points. That will obviously be subject to the scheduling of those services and where drivers are required to take breaks et cetera. We know that work is underway in regard to having interchanges and layovers at both Bradfield and at the airport. That will provide some capacity to park buses and allow drivers to have breaks as part of their shift at the actual precinct. If the question is more in relation to what might happen around Campbelltown, Liverpool, Penrith, then I think there would need to be some modelling done in terms of the likelihood of buses that will be involved in the provision of these services needing to layover. If that is in addition to the existing requirements, then it is something that may need to be considered.

An example here is what we've seen in Blacktown more recently with a new bus layover facility that was built. That is in fairly close proximity to the train station. So there may be a need to consider whether there is some land available near those other stations to look at providing some additional capacity. Certainly that's something we would support. The more opportunity there is for those layovers, then, generally, the more

efficiently you can schedule the services. If we can have modern driver facilities at those layovers, then it also assists in terms of the workforce.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: And just, perhaps, a two-part—I'm aware that many of the bus services in Western Sydney in particular are operated by private companies.

MATT THRELKELD: Yes.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: I'm assuming that will be the case with rapid buses into the future, that they would be contracted to take on those services.

MATT THRELKELD: Yes, that's right. Essentially, there are two regions, so region one and region two, operated by private bus companies that would come into play in terms of the provision of these services. I think with the Campbelltown-Liverpool services, that would be within region two, and then with Penrith, that would sit within region one. At the moment, region two is operated by Transit Systems; region one is operated by Busways. Our understanding is that those two private companies would have responsibility for the provision of these services when they do start, but it's probably a question for Transport for NSW in terms of the detail around that and any future plans for those services.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Just as a minor follow-up to that, are you aware of any coordination that's happening between those two service providers for when they reach the central point there? Obviously there are different services from south to north but they all have to coalesce in the middle there. Is there any coordination between the private operators or by Transport for NSW?

MATT THRELKELD: I'm not sure on that. I would assume that, based on our understanding of Transport for NSW planning these services, there would be some discussion. But, once again, it's probably best to seek clarification on that directly from Transport for NSW.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I have two questions. Your submission recommends the provision of the rapid bus service integrated with local buses and shuttle services. I'm not sure what it would look like. I have to say I'm always curious when there are big buses that come not very often with very few people on them versus smaller buses that come quite often that have more patronage. Can you give me your thoughts on that sort of thing?

MATT THRELKELD: I think that was more in relation to how the existing local services, for example around Penrith, Liverpool, Campbelltown, would then integrate with these potential rapid services that would be servicing the airport and Bradfield. In terms of the sizes, yes, over the years there have been different trials of frequency and size of bus and that sort of comes down to demand and how it's best to provide those services to get the most efficient outcome. At this point, without sort of the detail around the likely demand and how the services will operate in terms of the actual routes, it's probably difficult to understand. However, given that the planning of services is the responsibility of Transport for NSW, then it's probably a good question for the Transport people this afternoon.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: And the other question relates to areas that are slightly outside of—we're doing all these interchanges and local bus services. There are areas out there—take my electorate, for example, or just the Wollondilly shire. We have 32 bus services; 30 of them are school services. How do you reach those people in those areas or how do we get bus services to those people? Because as soon as they get in their car to go to a bus or a railway station, they will continue in their cars. How are we going to connect all those outlying areas, some of which have thousands of people living in them?

MATT THRELKELD: If you see the reports from the New South Wales Bus Industry Taskforce—and I was a member of the taskforce—certainly those gaps were identified by the taskforce. There are a number of recommendations around the medium-term bus plan, for example, to provide more of those local services, and to look at existing services to improve frequency, and also the coverage in terms of what time they start in the morning and what time they finish of a night, as well as when they run over a weekend and on public holidays. Certainly we support any growth in services to support communities who don't have good access to good public transport at the moment. But, ultimately, it's a funding issue. I know we've got a budget coming up and there is some hope from the industry that there might be some funding available to support the introduction of more bus services in Western Sydney. Hopefully that may be the case. If it's not this year, we would certainly hope that there may be some funding available next year, but we would appreciate your assistance there.

The CHAIR: We'll go for every cent we can get, quite frankly.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: In your submission you stated that tolls or parking charges might represent a way of financing transport infrastructure around the airport. You've got to weigh that up against financially disadvantaged communities in Western Sydney, which are generally lower down on the socio-economic scale. How do you see that working? You've just mentioned that there's a need to get some money going here, but how

do we see that happening where it won't discourage people from using the airport, which is what we ultimately want?

MATT THRELKELD: It's a good question. It's always a difficult one to balance in terms of that issue. Obviously tolls have been quite topical over the last few years.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Most tolled city in the world.

MATT THRELKELD: That's right. This one for us is probably more around that congestion management and better utilising higher capacity vehicles—trying to keep cars out of the general area of the airport but using buses and other modes to get people in and out. Whether it's included as an incentive or a disincentive, it would potentially be a way of contributing to the funding. But, yes, obviously it's a difficult one for government to consider from a political point of view.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: One of the more radical ideas that gets thrown around from time to time is making the Sydney CBD car free.

MATT THRELKELD: Yes.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: What are your thoughts about making the aerotropolis car free?

MATT THRELKELD: Anything that promotes the use of public transport, and buses in particular, we would support. That is why park and rides, for example, where they're positioned well, are a good option. It allows people that might be coming from outside of the area that do need to use a private mode of vehicle to get to the airport to park somewhere within a number of kilometres and then be transferred onto a bus. We think that would provide a good outcome.

The CHAIR: For example, a secure long-term parking station at somewhere like Leppington where the T-way is built and they can get straight in, and then you price your parking along the lines of Sydney airport, where you have to take out a mortgage to park. It hasn't quite discouraged everyone from driving there. One of the advantages of this airport, I assume, is that the public transport cost would be much cheaper because you're not paying the platform subsidy you are on on the previous PPP, which was the rail system into Sydney airport. That would create a cost mechanism, which I assume is what you're aiming at.

MATT THRELKELD: Yes, that's right. Certainly, there is opportunity there in terms of pricing, and then looking at both the parking and also the costs associated with potentially using a shuttle bus from the park and ride. That would be a matter for government in terms of whether the Government controlled the service or whether it was something for the private sector to consider. When you look at the geography of Western Sydney airport compared to Sydney, there's a lot more opportunity in terms of the positioning of park and rides around that airport or in locations that would still be attractive for people to have cost-effective parking and then be able to be transported to the airport fairly seamlessly.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: We're talking about, perhaps, Leppington or some of those areas. Would there be some better efficiencies if those park and rides were much further out so that you're gathering people from the Southern Highlands that come up to the Wilton area? If you had a park and ride there, would it be more efficient to gather your park and rides from further out, do you think?

JOHN KING: It makes sense, as long as you have priority.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: It's just a thought.

The CHAIR: You could do one at Narellan, one at Leppington—

JOHN KING: Correct.

The CHAIR: —and one at Campbelltown, and have those three stops along a T-way kind of thing to capture people.

JOHN KING: Continuity has got to be part of that whole planning process. People don't like to go backward to go forward.

The CHAIR: On, say, the Fifteenth Avenue proposal, which the planning money has been—there was \$2.6 million put in in 2021, which wasn't a lot at the time. Is that part of the proposal that's coming forward now, do we know, as part of that T-way planning—that we're getting these park and rides in?

MATT THRELKELD: Not that we're aware of.

The CHAIR: Don't worry. Transport will be coming at some stage.

MATT THRELKELD: It certainly makes sense to put them on those rapid bus service routes where, hopefully, we get to a frequency of five or 10 minutes. For someone that can park there and know that they can basically get a bus straightaway, that provides that convenience.

The CHAIR: If you could leave your car parked for seven days for \$70, it makes sense to get on the bus and go on your holiday. We're running out of time. Thank you for appearing today. You'll be provided with a copy of the transcript of today's proceedings for corrections. The Committee staff will also email any questions taken on notice from today and any supplementary questions from the Committee. We kindly ask that you return these answers within 14 days.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

(Short adjournment)

Mr ROSS GROVE, Western Sydney Regional Director, Property Council of Australia, sworn and examined

The CHAIR: I welcome our next witness. Thank you for appearing before the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure today to give evidence. Can you please confirm that you have been issued with the inquiry terms of reference and information about the standing orders that relate to the examination of witnesses?

ROSS GROVE: I can.

The CHAIR: Do you have any questions about this information?

ROSS GROVE: No.

The CHAIR: Would you like to make a short opening statement before we begin with questions?

ROSS GROVE: I'll make it short. This submission, "Jobs need roads", is not the sexiest submission that this Committee has seen. It's not futuristic and it's not visionary, but it does respond to the immediate capacities and limitations of government finances and the demand from industry to invest in the aerotropolis today. We've taken an evolutionary, not a revolutionary, approach to presenting what we need to this Committee. Pleasingly, the situation has evolved since we prepared our submission in early April. We are pleased that the Federal Government has come to the party with \$1 billion for roads in the aerotropolis—\$500 million for Mamre Road, \$400 million for the initial stages of Elizabeth Drive and some funding for the initial planning work on Badgerys Creek Road south and the Eastern Ring Road.

We are also pleased to see that the Minns Government has matched that funding contribution for Mamre Road and for Elizabeth Drive. The industry is quite buoyant about the certainty that provides for investors and for future prospective tenants in the Mamre Road precincts and the initial precincts of the Western Sydney Aerotropolis. Thirdly, we are also pleased that, only yesterday, the Minns Government has moved to fix what I describe as the governance shemozzle in the Western Sydney Aerotropolis by appointing Infrastructure NSW as the lead infrastructure coordinator for the Western Sydney Aerotropolis, and has flagged the existence of step-in powers should the need arise for them to be used. Many of our recommendations still stand, but I would like to flag that the evolution in the last month has meant that we've got some new advocacy asks on government. Namely, the investment in Mamre Road will result in a significant level of additional development, we expect, within the Mamre Road precinct.

I am pleased to see that we had BusNSW present before me. There is now a gap between the three region maps covering the aerotropolis. There is a void of bus services through the Mamre Road precinct, across Elizabeth Drive and up Luddenham Road. There are going to be workers moving in there, and they would very much value at least an interim bus service to support that demand. Similar to Mr Hagarty, I am a beneficiary of investment in rapid bus transport, and buses more broadly. I suspect that that will be the next immediate cab off the rank there. We're also looking for Infrastructure NSW, in its new role, to become involved in the technical assurance panel. That's a part of master plan processes for large-lot development within the Western Sydney Aerotropolis.

Currently the technical assurance panel brings together the other agency stakeholders that are involved in the consideration of a master plan. It's a forum for a large-lot developer to map out solutions for very large aerotropolis parcels of land, which our members are generally in the business of progressing at the Property Council. We're also very keen on our recommendations around WIK and SIC and industry using their contributions to bring forward infrastructure, as we are concerned about—as to, I think, Mr Hagarty's question—the potential overcooking of the existing pipeline of infrastructure projects and potentially rightsizing them to the demands of the next 30 to 40 years, rather than the demands of the next 100 years.

One last item: It will be the next cab off the rank in the road space—or one of the two next cabs off the rank. Luddenham Road is currently a council road. It's bit of a goat track. I have had exposure to this process for 15 years for reclassifying roads. I have always found it quite opaque. There's either a traffic warrant benchmark—I feel like that moves a bit. I note the Mayor of Penrith gave similar testimony. It needs to be reclassified as a State road and we need to start planning what its future looks like because I would anticipate there will be large landowners that will be dependent on that road upgrade and that future vision within the next five to seven years.

The CHAIR: I'll come back to that point. We have asked the councils to give us the movements on those roads that are currently zoned local and State. We will now move to questions, but, before we do, I wish to inform you that you may wish to take a question on notice and provide the Committee with an answer in writing within 14 days after receiving the question. I will start with a couple of questions. Basically, your argument about the triangle of missing bus infrastructure is not necessarily about movements of people to the airport but the industries that are being grown because they are co-located with the airport being serviced by a bus network.

ROSS GROVE: Correct. There are bus connections north of the water pipeline, which runs just to the north of Bakers Lane, and there's a planned intermodal just to the south of the water pipeline. Looking at the bus map and doing a little search, there is no current bus that will take me halfway down Mamre Road into the middle of the Mamre Road Precinct, and there's no bus that would take me along Aldington Road, which is a road that runs off Mamre Road and supports a significant chunk of that precinct.

The CHAIR: You mentioned the announcement yesterday, and obviously the Property Council is happy with that. In your submission you said that there should be a role for Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure to assist in enabling a lower cost outcome. That's the preparation of the six that are gold-plated. Do you see that that new structure will allow that capacity?

ROSS GROVE: I think it will. We're hopeful that it will. Credit to Tom Gellibrand; he's already reached out to the Property Council within the first 24 hours of taking on the role. We would certainly look for a pathway, either led by Infrastructure NSW or the department of planning, to right-size infrastructure where the need arises and industry can forward-fund a solution.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: In your submission you advise that the New South Wales Government consider dropping gold-plating of road projects to reduce up-front costs. Can you elaborate on what part of the gold-plating you are referring to and why that would be?

ROSS GROVE: I think an easy example—and this is in a landscape where we didn't have any funding for Elizabeth Drive—is Elizabeth Drive. The initial design format for Elizabeth Drive includes footpaths either side and a cycleway either side. I know others have suggested we reduce the road lane widths, but I think there's a question of—certainly there will need to be an active transport solution across the aerotropolis, but I don't think a cycleway the length of Elizabeth Drive is naturally needed on day one. I think delivering centres such as the Sydney Science Park or Bradfield—there's a case for active transit there, but we can look at cycle paths, say, as a more long-term outcome. You want to make sure that the corridor is there to deliver the very long-term vision, but you also want to make sure that you can deliver something which is cost-effective today.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: You talk about a heavy and metro rail interchange. What other interchange points should be prioritised?

ROSS GROVE: The areas in the submission that looked at the interchange points were very much—there's a debate around where metro rail should finish and the heavy rail network end. I'm very mindful—and this comes from my experience as a public transport user for most of my life—that the more interchange points you have, the longer the travel time; and the longer the travel time, the less attractive public transport is and the less access to the economic opportunities you have at the end of those transport nodes. The general feedback is that where you can stay on one mode of transport for as long as possible, that's the preferred outcome. We don't necessarily want to pick a fight as to whether the heavy/metro rail interchange point should be at Leppington or closer to the south line network. As a general position, we want as few of those interchange points as possible to ensure the easiest movement.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: You are talking about things that are quite close to the airport and not having too many stops so it's rapid for those people to get there. A lot of property development has happened further out than those particular areas you are talking about—certainly the Camden and Wilton sorts of areas—and some of those areas do not have any rail at this particular point. What would your solution be, and who should be paying for what sort of interchanges are there?

ROSS GROVE: I'm concerned that some of those areas don't have any buses as well—

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: Correct.

ROSS GROVE: —or have very close to zero buses. The network maps that I looked at that border that aerotropolis black hole have built-up communities such as those around Appin and Wilton, and they need, at the very minimum, to be supported by a much more intensified bus service than what already exists now. I actually see that as, yes, it's a service, but also, particularly for young people who are taking on driving at later and later ages, it's their economic development pathway and their pipeline. So the fact that it takes an hour and 30, potentially longer, to get from those outer areas to Campbelltown, which is not public transport central, is of concern, particularly if you're trying to get to an airport which is another stop or two away from that.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: My second question relates to the active transport links. I am curious because in other areas they've looked at putting the active transport in before some of the roads. They've certainly had public transport and active transport. Do you think that delaying the active transport will get people back in their cars when they have the opportunity to use the active transport? Areas like Warragamba and Silverdale that have

no access to the airport, for example, may be able to use active transport links. Do you think looking at active transport is a reasonable thing?

ROSS GROVE: When I refer to active transport I'm talking about cycleways, generally. From the industry's perspective, we want to deliver as many jobs as we can in response to the demand for industrial land. So the reason we've adopted a roads-first approach is that the roads are what's required to get the secure B-double access to warehousing, which is going to be the first mover in the Western Sydney Aerotropolis. Without those roads we don't have the job creation that creates the demand on the rest of the transport network. We are certainly "roads first" and this is a very "roads first" submission. We're not "roads only" and now we have some security around road funding; that's what's leading us to turn the conversation to other modes.

I will note my submission also points out it's not necessarily a Mamre Road issue but it's certainly an aerotropolis road issue. The aerotropolis development control plan has maximum parking rates for employment lands. Generally in local government planning instruments you'll see maximum parking rates in the Sydney CBD and the Parramatta CBD because the road network can't actually handle more parking. A similar approach has been taken to the aerotropolis, which infers that there is a vision whereby the use of private motor vehicles to drive to work, to park, to leave your car for eight hours and then to drive back is a model that the Government has sought to move away from. I think it's fair to say that warehousing is a fairly sparsely populated land use, so I think buses are the strongest way to get people to those lands. I just don't see, for the lengths that are involved, active transport as being the first priority.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: You were talking about employment lands. Should developers of large employment lands developments be made to put bus interchanges in place as part of their SIC?

ROSS GROVE: I think that should certainly be part of the plan. Right now—and the submission speaks in terms of capacity to pay—there is a cumulative range of taxes, fees and charges, and the current SIC is not operating on a full cost recovery basis as a result, because there is a feasibility point. Certainly a bus plan—whether they're bus shoulders, bus interchanges, even just raw bus stops—should feature in future road design and future plans. As people move into those warehouses there will be a need for that infrastructure. Can I just also flag, on that—and I'm not a bus-route planner—I have noted there are significant opportunities for large communities in Western Sydney to benefit from the jobs that are going to be provided in Mamre Road and beyond.

The current centres approach doesn't seem to align well with where we're putting our bus routes. We run off a very metro strategy, so yes, you'll catch the bus from Liverpool or you'll catch the bus from Penrith or St Marys. We've got to think in terms of how the 22-year-old in Willmot gets to the Mamre Road employment lands. Today he's got a bus to Mount Druitt station, a train from Mount Druitt to St Marys and then a long bus, which almost gets him a kilometre away from where he works. That doesn't provide for an attractive first or second job option, even with a forklift licence. I think that needs to be part of our thinking. We're not the experts in that space, but that's certainly what I think about when it comes to jobs, who can fill those jobs and the public transport solution.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I'm probably thinking further afield than that, but that's fine.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Thank you, Mr Grove. I'm sure there are plenty of 22-year-old women with forklift licences who'd love to work out at the airport as well.

ROSS GROVE: That's true as well.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: You said you were "roads first", and we just spoke about getting people to and from the jobs at the airport. You've listed six roads there as your key roads. There's a big one missing: Fifteenth Avenue. In terms of getting existing populations to and from the airport, you've got that Hoxton Park Road corridor where people already live, like Austral, Middleton Grange, Cartwright, Lurnea and Liverpool. There's a view that, certainly in the short to medium term, that's a much bigger generator of jobs and opportunity by not just easing congestion but generating economic activity. Whereas, say, the Eastern Ring Road and the new regional road from Badgerys Creek is effectively, in the short to medium term, only going to benefit the developers who have extensive landholdings there. I want to get your view on easing congestion and creating economic activity for people now as opposed to benefiting significant landholders.

ROSS GROVE: I think you'll find that certainly Mamre Road is developing quite quickly. I think we're in the later stages of two master plans in that Badgerys Creek Road precinct. Mamre Road will be delivering jobs faster than the Western Sydney airport. The race is a year and I think the industry's ahead in that regard. With respect to the roads we have on this list, those roads enable warehousing factories to have durable, climate-resilient truck access in order to enable their development. I'm actually quite confident that those lands can come online quite quickly, particularly the more industrial aspects. With respect to Fifteenth Avenue, I grew up on the Parramatta-Liverpool T-way. As I said, that reduced my connectivity time to Parramatta in the order of 45 minutes

to an hour as a Greystanes boy. I'm sure that delivered, unknowingly, economic dividends to me. I think the delivery of that bus corridor—which has received some funding, too, recently—should be a priority not just for the access to the airport but also the strength of Liverpool CBD's future as well.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: You spoke about your confidence that with those roads around the airport, you can see some activity. This is the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure. Just around serviceability—water's the big one—NBN, electricity and serviceable land in general, outside of roads, do your members have concerns about that and the pace of serviceable land in that part of the world?

ROSS GROVE: The industry's particularly nervous about stormwater, particularly in Mamre Road. We're currently going through two processes with government to tease out what the economic and engineering realities involved are. One is an IPART review which speaks back to industry's capacity to pay. I'm quite happy to table our submission with the Committee following today so that you're aware of that, and also the industry's Mamre Road landowner group submission. Yes, we're concerned about water, particularly management of stormwater, and broader utilities.

We've noted that a number of our members are making progress, particularly in the electricity space. They've entered into their own arrangements, such as the Bradfield substation on the Ingham land, which will unlock significant capacity when combined with roads. Yes, serviceability is a challenge. Tenants are fairly firm in their demands on that, and I think that's part of where we are today. Even if we had approvals, without roads, we wouldn't necessarily get development started because tenants are very protective about whether or not they sign leases to sites they can and can't access. Having driven around the aerotropolis roads in a period of heavy rainfall, yes, you do see those roads reduced to a single lane, full stop, not a single lane in each direction.

The CHAIR: With the impact on the roads and the lack of investment—obviously there's some money going into Mamre Road and Elizabeth, but that's probably a drop in the ocean on what they really need. It's probably \$1 billion on Mamre. Do you have an idea of how much investment you need just to take some of the pressure off, particularly, local roads in the area?

ROSS GROVE: We do have, and this kind of speaks to the amount of preparation and communication with government—directly speaking, Transport for NSW—and the progress and, in some cases, lack of progress on business cases and engagement with industry. We think a lot of that work has been lacking. I'd point you to page 8 of our submission, where we actually speak to—and we've taken this directly from the special infrastructure contribution. We've got the Mamre Road upgrade, including footpaths and cycleway. The estimated total project cost—this is in the SIC—is \$317 million. We've now got a State and Federal budget commitment for \$1 billion for that project. I'm nervous about what the final cost of that upgrade is, which is why we're always open to having the conversation around what silver solutions are, given that this SIC is less than four years old and it's estimated at \$317 million. So, yes, I'm worried about costs. I think—

The CHAIR: Sorry, just to interrupt, I think that's the point Tom from Infrastructure NSW was making this morning. A lot of money and a lot of time is spent on some of those business cases, rather than on delivering what actually needs to be delivered. That discrepancy between the funding you've got now and what the real cost is going to be—is that something that you'd need, more or less, in the business case? His point was that if you know where you're going, you need to do the geological work and all those kinds of things, but you don't need to get a business cost ratio or what your economic growth indicators are.

ROSS GROVE: Yes, I certainly think that there's been a lot of time and work and over-engineering occurring in the preparation of these business cases, which are largely being prepared without a great deal of dialogue with industry. The Property Council runs a landowners group—and in recent times it's been jointly with the UDIA—of all the large development-ready, development-capable landowners in the aerotropolis. We know which precincts are moving first; we know which precincts are moving later. Our concern is that whatever business cases and plans are being put together are not necessarily responsive to what's happening in the market and who's capable to come first.

The CHAIR: Where the money is going, yes.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: What are your organisation's thoughts on yesterday's announcement about Infrastructure NSW taking a greater role and greater responsibility around the airport?

ROSS GROVE: We love it. That's the long and the short. In the final chapter, we address governance. The Government has taken a hybrid of a couple of the options we put together. We like that the legislation that will be required is minimal, which means that they can be flexible and change things as circumstances arise. We also like that there's someone who has responsibility and step-in powers. It's not just Transport for NSW; it's Sydney Water and it's others. All these agencies have been marching to the beat of their own drum. We would hope that the intervention announced yesterday will bring those stakeholders together and, unlike previous

attempts through the Western Parkland City Authority, the Western City and Aerotropolis Authority and others, that INSW will have the step-in powers which means that they'll be taken a lot more seriously than some of those other endeavours.

The CHAIR: Unfortunately, we've run out of time. Thank you for appearing before the Committee today. You'll be provided with a copy of the transcript of today's proceedings for corrections. The Committee staff will also email any questions taken on notice from today and any supplementary questions of the Committee. We kindly ask that you return these answers within 14 days.

(The witness withdrew.)

Mr SHARATH MAHENDRAN, Creator, Building Beautifully, affirmed and examined

Mr ROYDON NG, Member, EcoTransit Sydney, sworn and examined

Mr MATTHEW DOHERTY, Committee Member, EcoTransit Sydney, sworn and examined

Mr GUY TRANTER, Committee Member, Action for Public Transport (NSW), affirmed and examined

The CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure today to give evidence. Can you please confirm that you have all been issued with the inquiry terms of reference and information about the standing orders that relate to the examination of witnesses?

SHARATH MAHENDRAN: Yes.

ROYDON NG: Yes.

MATTHEW DOHERTY: Yes.

GUY TRANTER: Yes.

The CHAIR: Do you have any questions about this information?

SHARATH MAHENDRAN: No.

ROYDON NG: No.

MATTHEW DOHERTY: No.

GUY TRANTER: No.

The CHAIR: I would ask, if anyone wants to make a short statement, that they keep them to two minutes as there are a number of you and we'd like to ask questions. I will start with Mr Mahendran, if you want to make a short opening statement.

SHARATH MAHENDRAN: Yes, not a problem. Good morning, panel, and thank you for offering me the opportunity to speak at your inquiry today. I am the creator of the YouTube channel Building Beautifully, a channel about transport and urban planning in Sydney. Since I started the channel 2½ years ago, my channel has achieved over 41,000 subscribers and has amassed over 4.6 million views. Of relevance today is that on my channel I have a dedicated video about the issues with the Western Sydney airport metro, which has received 119,000 views.

The Committee no doubt knows that public transport access to the new Western Sydney airport will primarily be via a new metro line, the Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport—quite the mouthful, I must add—that runs to the new airport from the T1 at St Marys. This might sound logical at first glance but, if you look deep enough, you're bound to be mystified by this decision. Despite the new airport being located in south-western Sydney, the established parts of the region such as Campbelltown and Liverpool are not going to be serviced by the new metro. If you live in the major town centres nearest the airport, such as Campbelltown and Liverpool, you will simply have no quick way to get to the new airport via rail because of the route that the Government chose.

Since I wrote my submission, I am happy to report that Transport for NSW has created routes for the rapid bus links to the new airport, but the time estimates are pretty outrageous. It will take 55 minutes to get to the airport from Liverpool by bus and 66 minutes from Campbelltown. For context, it will only take about half an hour by driving from both town centres to the new airport. Even more alarmingly, it turns out that getting from Campbelltown to the current existing Mascot airport will only take 45 minutes, which is longer than how long it will take Campbelltown residents to get to the new airport.

So what's going to happen now because of all of this? Well, travellers and employees of the new airport in south-western Sydney are not going to be as likely to take public transport to the new airport. Instead, they're going to be more likely to want to drive. Employees are going to be spending hours a week in cars, spending thousands on fuel, tolls and car maintenance every year, harming the environment and reinforcing car dependency in a region already far more reliant on cars than eastern Sydney. I'm not here to berate the decision to build the metro from St Marys, because I do appreciate the vision of this project. The plan is to extend it north to Schofields and Tallawong, and south to Macarthur. This will make it easier to get to the new airport from Campbelltown and will allow better connectivity from the north-west.

But I believe it is far more important that the South West Rail Link is extended as soon as possible as a heavy rail line. It will better link Liverpool, Cabramatta, Fairfield and Glenfield to the new airport. Also, by extending it as a heavy rail line and not a metro, you save money on converting the existing South West Rail Link.

With some track rearrangements at Glenfield, the T8 could be rerouted to the new airport, which would connect both of Sydney's major airports by one rail line, making transfers a breeze. Plus, this would allow the metro to be extended in one straight shot down to Macarthur instead of having a branch to Macarthur and a branch to Leppington. Scheduling around branches is notoriously difficult otherwise.

Finally, the South West Rail Link actually serves an important purpose to the Sydney trains network, providing somewhere for services to terminate instead of forcing all heavy rail services on the main south to terminate at Macarthur. Truthfully, I cannot think of any reason to not extend the South West Rail Link as a heavy rail line as soon as humanly possible. In the interim, this inquiry needs to urge the Government and Transport for NSW to come up with faster routes to the new airport from Liverpool and Campbelltown. Times of nearly one hour simply will not cut it. If dedicated T-ways need to be built to cut times down, then so be it. Build them. I thank this inquiry again for giving me the opportunity to speak to you today, and I strongly hope what I say can help inform and shape the future of public transport at the new Western Sydney airport.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Roydon, I know that you're probably well across this as well.

ROYDON NG: Yes. Thanks for inviting EcoTransit to appear before this inquiry. EcoTransit supports the extension of the existing South West Rail Link from Leppington to Western Sydney International Airport terminal. As part of the Sydney Trains network, heavy rail is the highest priority and the least cost intensive, both fiscally and environmentally, as an option for providing transport into the Western Parkland City. EcoTransit notes that Sydney Trains double-decker heavy rail could deliver passengers seated comfortably, with luggage stored effectively, between Western Sydney airport and Sydney airport in less than an hour, with trains running every 10 minutes. The Committee is invited to study EcoTransit's proposed train service plan, showing a reconfiguration of the Sydney Trains network to include direct trains from Western Sydney airport to Central, Liverpool and Sydney airport.

Converting the South West Rail Link, Leppington to Glenfield, into Sydney metro is a downgrade and a segregation of Sydney's rail network. Additionally, the proposed stage two of Western Sydney airport metro to Glenfield has a major devil in its detail. It does not connect with the Western Sydney airport international terminal but actually starts one station south, at aerotropolis station, as seen in the New South Wales Future Transport Strategy 2056. The construction of Western Sydney airport international terminal station and aerotropolis station should be paused, pending the outcome of this inquiry. EcoTransit urges the inquiry to investigate and make the recommendation that the Western Sydney airport international terminal station and aerotropolis station be redesigned for four rail tracks: two Sydney metro from St Marys and two Sydney trains to Leppington.

I should also note that the Fix Liverpool Transport campaign's recent engagement with Edmondson Park and Leppington residents earlier this year has found many residents questioning why it's necessary to actually replace an existing Sydney Trains line with Sydney Metro, again. The New South Wales Government in 2011 initially committed to the expansion of the Sydney Trains heavy rail and CityRail network, including the North West Rail Link. But Transport for NSW bureaucrats overstated the benefits of removing Sydney Trains from future rail expansion in Sydney by suppressing public servants and consultants that had inconvenient findings that questioned the metro. We ultimately urge the New South Wales Government to support the expansion of Sydney Trains on the T2 Leppington line and T5 Cumberland line as well as the T8 Airport and South line, especially to Western Sydney airport via Leppington on the South West Rail Link. My counterpart, Matt, has a few more words to add.

MATTHEW DOHERTY: I endorse what Roydon and Sharath had to say about the South West Rail Link. As a regular user of Edmondson Park station and others, I'm intimately familiar with the surrounds. EcoTransit has long advocated for sustainability and cost effective public transport, which means essentially building on what we have already got when it comes to major transport infrastructure. We have a Sydney Trains network that has been dramatically underfunded over the decades, but still performs the task admirably well. The potential, though, for the complete breakdowns of both metro systems and Sydney Trains has shown us recently that there needs to be more resilience built into the system in the event of these black swan events, which are becoming too regular to call black swans.

My two major points are that we must retain public infrastructure in public hands, which entails the South West Rail Link being extended from Leppington through to the new airport, as my colleague has just stated. If we are to accept the reality that from the north it will be a metro from St Marys, then a Sydney Trains connection to the south builds in this resilience that we've been speaking about, should there be one of these catastrophic failures caused by who knows what.

In addition, this inquiry must call for a pause on the building of the metro from St Marys down towards the new airport, so that the rather unfortunate building of facts on the ground reality that can't be reversed is stopped and we do have the time to properly consider what transport infrastructure we need at the airport. It also

allows for fantastic connections between the two airports in peak hour trains. Given the quadrupled East Hills line, one can travel from Glenfield to Wollie Creek in 22 minutes. I have done this repeatedly. The existing infrastructure actually works really well when you give it a chance. This idea that to be made effective and efficient we can only go through metro is curious, to put it mildly. The final conclusion is that we must call for a pause on the building of this infrastructure and on the building of the metro connection to the airport and aerotropolis.

The CHAIR: Mr Tranter, did you want to make an opening statement?

GUY TRANTER: I will be fairly brief. I will just say that the concluding paragraph of our submission was basically recommending reconsidering the type of rail mode for St Marys to the airport and aerotropolis. I am still not even sure whether we should say aerotropolis or Bradfield or whatever. There's a bit of terminological confusion, I think. In addition to that, there is a very persuasive case for Leppington to the airport having a higher priority for the reasons that my fellow witnesses here have stated. I would also add, as Roydon said, the awkwardness of the current plan, where the heavy rail from Glenfield would terminate at the aerotropolis and people going to the airport in that direction would then have to change for one stop to the airport. Aside from the relative benefits of different modes, the benefit of an airport-to-airport journey on one train would be obvious. I will leave that there.

The CHAIR: Before we begin the questions, you may wish to take a question on notice and provide the Committee with an answer in writing within 14 days after receiving the questions—essentially if there's something you'd prefer to provide in more detail. Roydon, can I quickly go back to something you were talking about in regards to the station? You say that a closer reading of the Sydney Metro announcement for metro from Glenfield reveals that stage two of the Western Sydney Airport line will not connect to the actual international airport terminal but only the aerotropolis. Could you provide a bit more detail?

ROYDON NG: Sure, I'm happy to. As outlined in the EcoTransit submission, the EcoTransit submission cites the press release from Sydney Metro. Also I've got in front of me the *Future Transport Strategy 2056*. It's a bit hard to read, but we see—

The CHAIR: That's all right. Maybe if you could email that—if we could get a copy of it later, Roydon.

ROYDON NG: Yes. This is a State Government document—*Future Transport Strategy 2056*. It shows the South West Rail Link—what is marked as the new Cumberland line—only extending as far as the aerotropolis core and then one station beyond that is Western Sydney International Airport terminal. Therefore, the stage two of this proposed supposedly Western Sydney airport metro line doesn't actually go to the airport terminal.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Yes, essentially that was going to be my question as well. At some point there's got to be a mode change because you've got heavy rail at one end and metro at the other, unless you convert the South West line to metro. I want to get each of your thoughts on that, including Sharath. I know you've done a video on it and I wrote to you congratulating you on it. I'll get everyone's view on what's the best option for the Leppington line. Given budgetary considerations, there's the ideal and then there's the practical, so I just want to get your thoughts on that.

ROYDON NG: If I may, extending the South West Rail Link as heavy rail Sydney Trains, as per the EcoTransit submission, we have put together a train plan proposal. It shows how Sydney Trains can be integrated all the way to Western Sydney airport with services connecting to Sydney airport, Central, Liverpool et cetera. That would be the least cost intensive as it's simply just an extension of the line beyond Leppington through Rossmore and up to Western Sydney airport—

MATTHEW DOHERTY: Through greenfields.

ROYDON NG: —for the shortest distance compared to other potential proposed metro extensions, hence why extending the South West Rail Link would be first priority and also why EcoTransit is calling for a pause in the construction of the Western Sydney airport terminal metro station and aerotropolis metro station. Ultimately, as my counterpart Matt has said, the Sydney Metro tunnelling is essentially locking out any opportunity for an extension of heavy rail South West Rail Link because, without the four tracks, we're begrudgingly forced into having a metro extension from aerotropolis through to Glenfield, or at least Leppington. It's physically not possible to extend the South West Rail Link if the construction of the aerotropolis and the airport terminal metro stations isn't redesigned.

SHARATH MAHENDRAN: I pretty much agree with that. I think that extending the South West Rail Link on its own is absolutely a priority because, as I have very clearly outlined, residents in areas closest to the new airport, like Liverpool, Campbelltown and Fairfield, are going to have a lot of difficulty getting to the new airport easily because of the route that's been chosen. Buses are a valid form of public transport but the time estimates that have been provided to us by Transport for NSW back in May are simply outrageous. They're very

long. Something needs to be done to bring those times down, I believe, because the simple matter of fact is that, even if we were to start constructing or start working on a business case to extend the south-west rail link tomorrow, that line is not going to be extended for probably at least another eight to 10 years. That's assuming a very best-case scenario, which is quite unlikely.

But, coming back to the south-west rail link, I feel that I've outlined pretty clearly why I think it needs to be extended as a heavy rail line. It provides capacity to the Sydney Trains network. It would allow the current existing metro from St Marys to the aerotropolis to just be extended in a straight shot down to Campbelltown instead of having to have those annoying branches. It also allows those links to those other suburbs and—I think most importantly—would allow you to be running services from the new airport to Glenfield, then to the old airport at Mascot and then to the city. So you'd have one train line. Quite frankly I've always said on my YouTube channel and publicly that I believe that would've been the most logical option for the airport link to begin with, but even now it still can be done and I believe that this inquiry should recommend that.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: I want to go back to EcoTransit and your submission around the rail plan. At present you could potentially go above-ground heavy rail and have a mode change at either aerotropolis south or aerotropolis core to metro. In your proposal, how do you see that working in order to get heavy rail all the way into the airport? Would it be tunnelling or above ground—

MATTHEW DOHERTY: A combination of both, I would expect.

ROYDON NG: Yes, combination of both. And then the station boxes at the Western Sydney International Airport Terminal Station and the aerotropolis station would need to have more platforms. The current proposal is for only two Sydney Metro platforms. Also, on that point, the redesign of those two stations would also mean the station box probably needs to be longer, because it appears that the Western Sydney airport metro is also a three- to four-carriage metro, not a six- to eight-carriage metro which we're seeing on the north-west, and city and south-west. It's, in essence, a much smaller metro of a different diameter, or different length, and different power supply, different specs to the even existing metros that we have.

The CHAIR: As long as we're consistent—we've got a different mode of metro on every single line, I think.

ROYDON NG: Yes, we're potentially having three separate metros.

SHARATH MAHENDRAN: Yes, the incompatibilities are a little bit ridiculous to have three—

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: A little bit?

SHARATH MAHENDRAN: —metros incompatible with one another even though they're all being built at the same time.

The CHAIR: Yes, I think we're all very aware of that.

GUY TRANTER: In theory somewhere—we've got a common gauge and, I had been thinking, a common system of electrification: 1,500 DC. But if in fact our different metro lines are having different electrification systems, then that gets wiped out. Basically, in theory you could talk about the two sharing tracks for one stop. But then if you've got driverless trains with trains with drivers, I think, yes, that would be the option you would wipe out as the very first point of any report. You've got to look at side-by-side tracks.

The CHAIR: One of the questions that I have asked a few other people—because I know you're a details guy, Roydon, so you may know some of this. The current routes have been identified, but what is not clear is if any land has actually been identified as being reserved for a future rail. Are you aware of any reservation of the lands themselves?

ROYDON NG: I've printed out the south-west rail planning business case document from their website. This is a Commonwealth department. The business case for the Western Sydney airport metro, especially the second stage, is a joint Commonwealth and State funded business case in progress. Transport for NSW has started to reserve some corridor in the corridor preservation process. But from my understanding the business case has not been finalised. I think there is much opportunity as part of the business case to actually explore properly a Sydney Trains heavy rail extension and not simply focus on a defaulted mode before the business case has even been completed per se.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: The land has been gazetted. There are a number of residents in my electorate who can't sell their land. Transport hasn't purchased it and they can't lease it, and they've got a train going through their house. So it has been gazetted; it just hasn't been acquired.

The CHAIR: For both lanes? Sorry, we're doing our own little Committee inquiry up here.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: The extension of the Southwest corridor has been gazetted.

SHARATH MAHENDRAN: I think they've done both. You can see it on the website.

The CHAIR: They're gazetted but not reclaimed. They're being built on, essentially.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: I came in late so I'm not sure where the questioning is up to. I'm trying to catch up, sorry.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Leppington.

The CHAIR: We had the problem from the other side where the metro is being built from St Marys. Obviously that's joining up to the western line. One of the things I was going to ask you, in terms of the heavy rail coming through Glenfield and joining up with the airport, a lot of movements—the further west you go—tend to be north-south rather than east-west. You'll see that on the Regents Park line, Roydon, where they're actually coming through, and the movements around Parramatta to the city. When you're looking at that joining up with the existing airport line, how do you see that marrying up with what is actually happening with what we think will be the movements, where they'll be going from Campbelltown to Penrith route, Liverpool through to Parramatta—the movements kind of sweep across that corridor, and that's who will be captured by the airport.

ROYDON NG: North-south connections are very important. We know that construction of stage one of St Marys to Western Sydney airport has commenced. It would probably involve, potentially, too much of a cost to reconvert that back into Sydney Trains construction. Although, that being said, construction hasn't been completed. North-south connections from St Marys through to Tallawong, Schofields and through Campbelltown, that is important. EcoTransit, initially, would also have proposed a line that would be done as heavy rail to allow freight to actually divert off the western line, avoid the city centre part towards Parramatta of rail network and go down towards the Southern Highlands and then complete Maldon-Dombarton through down to the Illawarra. But now, seeing that stage one of Metro Western Sydney Airport has been—construction has commenced, I think that may have sailed, per se.

The CHAIR: One of the other documents that has been presented—I don't know if you've seen it: Parramatta 2050. One of the proposals in there from the Parramatta City Council was to extend the metro through Parramatta and down to the airport.

ROYDON NG: That's the new Cumberland line. EcoTransit's position, as my counterpart Matt has said, is to use existing infrastructure where possible. At this stage, EcoTransit would not support abandoning the Y-link between Merrylands and Parramatta—which also skips Harris Park. We would see maintaining direct trains from, say, Merrylands station, both to Granville and Central, and also from Merrylands, Fairfield, all the way through out to Blacktown, Schofields as well. Parramatta to Epping, that section should really be serviced by an extension of Parramatta light rail. There is no reason, really, to convert the Cumberland line to metro, because converting the Cumberland line to metro also has implications affecting the section between Cabramatta and Liverpool, which means, if you convert that to metro it again makes it impossible for any Liverpool to city via Regents Park inner west line trains again. That's going to cause more grief.

MATTHEW DOHERTY: Thank you to Roydon for giving so much detail. I just want to make the simple point, in short, that retaining public infrastructure in public hands must be a priority. The ship has sailed in regard to the Bankstown line and elsewhere, but it beggars belief that we would be considering converting the Fairfield line into metro.

The CHAIR: Certainly I wouldn't be considering it. As the member for Auburn, it takes in part of that line, as Roydon is well aware. It was a proposal that was brought before the Committee by Parramatta council in its proposal. Basically, it's like *The Good Soldier Schweik*: All lines lead to Parramatta.

SHARATH MAHENDRAN: I would like to add to that. In terms of converting the Cumberland line, I would agree that it doesn't make much sense. Extending the metro west, which is going to end in Parramatta, to the new airport could be something I would support. They should definitely be investigating that. The Sydney Metro West—I personally support that project. I think it would be made a lot more useful if they could extend it west, going through councils like Holroyd and Fairfield. These are areas that don't generally have good public transport access. I've spoken about that at a previous inquiry. I think it would be a brilliant opportunity to create more dense, walkable neighbourhoods in Western Sydney. Going back to the north-south links, I strongly believe that Sydney needs more north-south links. I have, again, spoken about that.

MATTHEW DOHERTY: It just needs to be non-radial.

The CHAIR: Isn't this where the opportunity costs are coming in too? The metro west is \$25 billion, and it covers almost the same distance as stage one of the airport line from St Marys to the aerotropolis, which

comes in at a cost of \$11 billion. If you're marrying up extending—you say that Merrylands does have a train station; Westmead now has three because it has the light rail, metro and heavy rail. If you are talking about suburbs like Narellan and Oran Park, which are greenfield sites with gazettes for the land, do you think there's a greater efficacy with just getting on and building, if nothing else, the metro between the aerotropolis and Campbelltown via Narellan so that you're capturing that part of south-west Sydney where there is absolutely nothing and you're at least providing a gateway for those outer Southern Highlands suburbs coming in through there and creating opportunities? Which one would you look like at first?

SHARATH MAHENDRAN: I would definitely look at extending the metro south from the aerotropolis. Right now, just ending it at the aerotropolis, it's a bit of a dead end. It doesn't really go anywhere, and there's nothing there yet. I think the idea of building a city there—it's a great visionary idea. But right now, as it stands, there's nothing there. It's not going to benefit many people until you extend it to Campbelltown. Then you have the added advantage of linking people in Oran Park and Narellan to the heavy rail line in Campbelltown. As you mentioned, the T8 line has pretty great services. Because they quad-tracked it all the way past Revesby, it's a pretty fast service. You're linking those people in Oran Park and Narellan to that really brilliant T8 service. You're also linking them to St Marys. I still think we should support a business case, at least, to extend the Sydney Metro West to the new airport, but I would strongly support an extension of metro south to Macarthur and an extension of the south-west rail link as a heavy rail line.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Can I jump in to extend on that? Being from Riverstone and talking about disconnection, the metro line from Tallawong, which doesn't meet up with the Schofields T1 line—and through some of the most disadvantaged areas of Sydney through to St Marys. Where do you see that fitting into the mix of the new lines coming all over the place, and perhaps, in particular, to the line from Westmead directly to the aerotropolis?

SHARATH MAHENDRAN: I haven't really gone into this in much depth, but I do genuinely believe that extending it from St Marys to Tallawong would benefit so many people in so many ways. For starters, linking Tallawong to Schofield is somewhat out of the scope of the Western Sydney airport, but it is related. That would provide so much benefit to communities along the Richmond line and towards Parramatta. Because, getting to the Hills from those areas, even though the metro is so close to Schofields, no-one can really benefit from it along the Richmond line because, for some baffling reason, it just ends at Tallawong.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: It's 2.7 kilometres.

SHARATH MAHENDRAN: Yes, it's so short. It has always boggled my mind that they didn't just extend it to Schofields. It would make commuting from Parramatta to the Hills so much easier—so extending it to Schofields and then extending it to, as you mentioned, some of those disadvantaged communities that you have. Marsden Park is a new community, but you have the communities like Tregear and Whalan. You could probably extend the metro line and build some stations along there, allowing for some urban renewal and connecting those communities better than ever before to not only key employment centres like Macquarie Park, Castle Hill, Chatswood and the CBD but also to the new airport. What you're doing in that process is creating a much more integrated public transport network because you're going to have opportunities to transfer at Schofields, to transfer at St Marys and then also at Epping and Chatswood because it keeps going. I would strongly support that as well.

MATTHEW DOHERTY: And connectivity is key.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Since we're going all-out transport nerd, I wanted to get your thoughts. In the previous hearings, the interesting topic of very fast rail came up. Your thoughts on it generally and whether, if you were to put in a Sydney to Newcastle, Sydney to Canberra-Melbourne link, whether Western Sydney airport would be a critical stop as part of any fast rail?

MATTHEW DOHERTY: It could potentially be. The Sydney stop might be a Western Sydney stop closer to Parramatta and, indeed, given the amount of redevelopment that is taking place in lands like Camellia and Rosehill, that might be your place for a grand interchange. I'm not speaking from any formal documents that we have. I haven't given the matter tremendous examination in terms of from there south towards the airport. There would be some problematic terrain to cover, including Prospect. But I certainly would be in favour of it, and I think there are significant opportunities there. Having an interchange with the Metro West as well would allow those commuters coming from the Central Coast to transfer to a service that could potentially get them sub-20 minutes into the city. But also you have to remember that Central Coast commuters aren't just going to the CBD. They would also be interested in going to Parramatta or other parts that are more accessible.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: And the airport.

SHARATH MAHENDRAN: Building on that, as you said, Central Coast communities and communities all over Sydney aren't just going to the city. We need to stop talking just about how we're going to

get to the city. Building that very fast link between maybe, say, Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney, Newcastle, Brisbane et cetera, it doesn't need to go to Central. It could go to somewhere like Sydney Olympic Park, which I think is one of the proposals. Parramatta also makes a lot of sense. Again, this is why it's a brilliant reason because, as you say, do we need to maybe, say, build it to the Western Sydney airport to allow that connectivity?

But this is why I mentioned earlier that we should extend the Sydney Metro West to the new airport because, by extending that to the new airport—imagine you have that high-speed rail interchange at, say, Sydney Olympic Park. You could go from Canberra to Sydney Olympic Park, get off your high-speed train, get onto a metro, get to the Western Sydney airport. Who knows; maybe you could do that all in two or three hours. I think that's pretty impressive, given how long it takes to get from Canberra to Sydney by train right now. It's outrageous how long it takes. It's four or five hours.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Since we're going all-out nerd, in your opinion how would we unscramble the egg of having the different metro voltages throughout the network?

ROYDON NG: We need to go back and take a good look at how the metro business models are—some of the arrangements in the public-private partnerships of it as well. For example, my understanding is that the Parklife Metro consortium, which has been given the tender for Western Sydney airport metro stage one, has much more control over designing the specifications of it. Transport for NSW has left it up to the private sector per se to design the specifications of it or how long the metros will be. Then you have different operators, such as Metro Trains Sydney running north-west, city and south-west. They've designed it to different specs. Now we're having three different metros. It's a similar issue, for example, with the light rail in the city. The L2 and L3 don't merge well with the L1 to Dulwich Hill. There should be a standard specification for all single-deck fleet per se, and this goes back to potentially some of the lessons from pre-Federation, when we standardised everything.

The CHAIR: You had to change at Albury.

ROYDON NG: Now we're determined to be breaking it apart again.

MATTHEW DOHERTY: Scrambling more eggs.

ROYDON NG: I'm happy to table this document as well, *Fixing the trains in Sydney: 1855 revisited*. It's by Andy Thomas, who was a consultant involved in the 2010 Sydney Morning Herald-led public transport inquiry. The breaker gauge, or different specs in having an "integrated network", is laughable. We should really focus on a holistic network with interoperability that services everyone and not simply leave it up to specific niches of the private sector to determine the scoping and specs of our transport.

The CHAIR: If you can provide that.

ROYDON NG: Yes.

The CHAIR: Guy, did you have a view on the unscrambling, because I think it was you that originally raised the problem of the different voltages?

GUY TRANTER: I'm not well enough across the stages of construction and planning of each one to know whether any of that can be walked back, basically. European railways have multi-current locomotives and trains, but you would not build a multi-current train, I don't think, for just one stop from the aerotropolis to the airport. In a sense, a metro system has less problems than, say, a light rail or suburban rail system with junctions and interchanges. The lines do tend to be more separate. But, yes, it was a shocking state of things that, just like with light rail lines and then again with metro lines, we've let different standards be put out.

The CHAIR: Across the whole network.

GUY TRANTER: Yes.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much for attending the Committee today. You will be provided with a copy of the transcript of today's proceedings for corrections. The Committee staff will also email any questions taken on notice from today and any supplementary questions from the Committee. We kindly ask that you return these answers within 14 days.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

(Luncheon adjournment)

Professor DAVID LEVINSON, Professor of Transport in the School of Civil Engineering, University of Sydney, affirmed and examined

The CHAIR: I welcome our next witness. Thank you for appearing before the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure to give evidence. Can you please confirm that you have been issued with the inquiry's terms of reference and information about the standing orders that relate to the examination of witnesses?

DAVID LEVINSON: Yes.

The CHAIR: Do you have any questions about this information?

DAVID LEVINSON: No.

The CHAIR: Would you like to make a short opening statement before we begin questions?

DAVID LEVINSON: I am David Levinson, and I am a professor of transport at the University of Sydney. I would like to highlight a few points from my submission regarding the sequence and timing of investments. The Western Sydney International Airport is a major—but as yet unproven—investment in Western Sydney. No additional funds should be committed for major new infrastructure until evidence of the effectiveness of current investments can be assessed and demonstrated—that is, while we might expect that the Western Sydney airport and aerotropolis will eventually be successful, this may take decades, and additional infrastructure investments in the absence of changes in demand—that is, from new land development—will not magically make that happen but will instead drain resources from solving real problems.

Projects that may be justified well after the development begins to materialise in the aerotropolis area are hard to justify before that. While there is always a chicken-and-egg problem and some capital may need to be ventured to ensure gains, given the large amount of infrastructure already being built in advance of development and the uncertainty, the risk of a ghost city remains. While project promoters hope that outcome does not occur, transport and land use investment should generally be concurrent. Transport with no development will be unused, and development without sufficient transport will be slow and inconvenient.

In my submission, I make specific suggestions about the needs for bus rapid transit services in the short term and the likely direction of metro and trains investments in the long run. I'll repeat a point from my previous submission: Compatibility on metro technologies—train size and power—should be insisted upon. Metro lines should use interoperable vehicles and power systems. This allows for future flexibility, and the marginal benefits of optimising for a particular line are outweighed by the loss of compatibility and interchangeability of trains that would permit more alternative routing strategies in the future. Finally, planning and decision-making should be conducted openly and with transparency, and nothing in this process should be considered Cabinet in confidence or commercial in confidence as those help avoid the mistakes of secrecy.

The CHAIR: I will open up about investment. You're almost saying what the Property Council was saying earlier that the areas that are actually getting the development now are the areas where the investment should happen. I assume that's consistent.

DAVID LEVINSON: I'm not sure that I'm consistent with the Property Council, having not seen their testimony. Where the development is occurring now and has occurred in the past is where our primary investment should be made rather than in greenfields where people have promised future development. I'm not exactly sure that's what they said.

The CHAIR: I forgot to say at the beginning before we began questions that if you wish to take questions on notice, and provide the Committee with an answer in writing within 14 days after receiving the question, you're at liberty to do so.

DAVID LEVINSON: I would be happy to.

The CHAIR: Essentially, looking at your submission—and again, this may be consistent with what other people have said to us—the extension of the existing heavy rail at Leppington and then having a metro extension to Campbelltown would make much better sense of using existing infrastructure.

DAVID LEVINSON: In the long run that should be done. The Leppington trains extension to aerotropolis or the airport would make more sense than, say, a metro line on that same corridor.

The CHAIR: Given how far construction has gone already on the metro on the other side, obviously that heavy rail line would need to link up with the metro at some point. Where would you see that going to?

DAVID LEVINSON: I think you could connect to one of the stations at aerotropolis and then people who are actually going on to the airport could use the metro for one segment as a shuttle. Many airports have

people movers, and in this case, we would be using—the Sydney airport has a train line between domestic and international. You could see the metro functioning the same way as shuttling people who wanted to use the South West Rail Link by taking the metro from the airport to aerotropolis and then transferring to a train line. You would have to reconfigure that final station for trains and metro—there are designs for that which are probably a little bit more complicated than we can convey verbally—and I think that's been done in lots of places. Given the relative lack of development there, it would be relatively easy to do that compared to a lot of other things that are being done.

The CHAIR: At the moment, yes.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: You give the example of Dulles airport, which is a great American-centric example. If you look further afield, Incheon in South Korea is an airport that was purpose built with a city that has pretty much come out of the ground in 10 or so years. Have you looked at other airports or aerotropolises around the world? What are your best-case examples, and what are the lessons learnt from failures and successes?

DAVID LEVINSON: A lot of this depends on the context. If the main Sydney airport were to be closed, then this would of course be a successful airport because it would be the primary airport. That's what happened in Denver when the replacement for Stapleton was opened, which was basically the last major North American new airport to be built, and that was 25 years ago now. Dallas Fort Worth was built on a greenfield between Dallas and Fort Worth, and they moved all of the major demand from Dallas Love Field to the new airport. Otherwise, it is a peripheral airport. There are secondary airports in lots of cities. San Francisco has San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose.

Los Angeles has about five airports serving it, but most of the international travel stays going through LAX in Los Angeles and SFO in San Francisco, because those are the ones that are closer to where people want to be. Not that it won't have any demand, but the level of demand that it will get will take a long time to achieve. I think that it's not about what your vision looks like in 50 years; it's the process of getting from here to there that we really need to keep in mind, because premature investments are wasting resources. Those are resources that could be spent somewhere else. That's the key point, I think.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: But again, if you look at Incheon and the other example that keeps getting thrown up, Schiphol airport—they're cited by people driving the airport and aerotropolis as the examples that they want to look at. Are those examples valid?

DAVID LEVINSON: I don't think those examples are valid because those are the primary international airports for their respective cities. If I'm going into Amsterdam, then I'm going into Schiphol. It's well connected. It's much closer, relatively, to the heart of Amsterdam, Rotterdam or anywhere in the Randstad than Western Sydney airport is to the heart of Sydney. It's at the edge of the city. Incheon is probably a somewhat better example, but I still think Dulles airport is probably the closest example where you've had an airport that is really convenient that has stayed open. They moved many of the international flights to Dulles. But for domestic aviation, anyone who could use Washington national airport rather than Dulles would use Washington national airport rather than Dulles.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: You touched on the metro incompatibility in your opening statement. Can I get you to expand on that a little bit further?

DAVID LEVINSON: My understanding—and there is a link in my submission to an article by Alex Gooding—is that the three metro lines that are under construction now are incompatible with each other. They are incompatible in terms of their power sources and they are incompatible, in the case of the Western Sydney airport metro, in terms of the width of the trains. As a consequence, you can't interline; you can't take a wider train on a platform that was designed for a narrower train. You might be able to retrofit the other way around. You can't, without some work, retrofit different power supplies—AC versus DC and different voltages and those kinds of things. This is something that should have been sorted. It never should have arisen as an issue and should be sorted as quickly as possible. I don't believe it is too far gone to be fixed, but people should be thinking about this issue rather than going with their initial ideas from a few years ago.

I think we see with the light rail lines what happened when the light rail cars on the L1 line had some structural issues. It took, what, six months for the L2 line trains to be reconfigured to be used as backups for them, whereas it should have been something that could have been done essentially overnight, had they been the same size and the same gauge stations. It was a relatively minor retrofit, but there was retrofit required. There is a balance between looking forward and looking backward. Metro isn't compatible with Sydney Trains, okay, but then metro shouldn't be incompatible with itself, looking forward, and it is not like there is a huge gain in capability from using one standard over another in a particular place. The gain is that you have flexibility in the long run if you allow them to interline. You can particularly see that with the Western Sydney airport and the north-west

metro, where eventually they will be connected, but right now when they are connected people have to transfer trains. There is no possibility of through-running with the current train technology stack.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Do you happen to know if there is any justification for doing that? What would the possible justification be for that incompatibility?

DAVID LEVINSON: You would have to ask the people who thought of that. The argument that I have heard—I really can't believe that that was the rationale—was that the Western Sydney airport trains are wider so that people who have suitcases can be more comfortable. That doesn't make a lot of sense to me because on the T8 line people are already using it and they are saying it's a little crowded. This train isn't going to be as crowded as the T8 line for many years. But, more importantly, you can turn your suitcases sideways and you can make the trains longer if that is really the issue about space, or you can put in some overhead racks or use different carriages on selected airport cars. You can do this in a lot of different ways without being incompatible and inflexible. The airport is one of many destinations on that line. It's probably not even going to be the primary destination. It's one stop among many. It shouldn't be driving the whole thing.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Can you think of any reason that that would happen?

DAVID LEVINSON: I can think of institutional reasons why that may have happened; I can't think of technological reasons why that would have been chosen. Institutionally, having separate technologies ensures that they can't interline. If you want to ensure that they don't become part of one organisation, then that makes it a little bit more complicated in the long run. I don't think that is a good reason to do things, but that is a reason that people may have had in the backs of their heads when they thought of this. It could have been that the technological people were scoping what's optimal for this system without thinking about compatibility issues. That may have happened, but that is a short-term reason and I would hope that they would have at least thought through the compatibility problem. I don't know.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: Do you think that we, as a Committee, could recommend that we decide on one set of rules going forward?

DAVID LEVINSON: I think so, and I think you should suggest that they work on retrofitting the trains that haven't yet been delivered to be compatible. This will inevitably cause delays; that will be the counter that you will hear in the question of how easy is this to be done. I am not a mechanical engineer or an electrical engineer, so they will have to tell you. I don't know how far along the train construction is. I assume there is a factory somewhere where the trains are being assembled for 2026 delivery, but I haven't seen them out in the field yet, unlike the trains on the current metro. But given that is already running and that will be running sooner, that is the standard that the other systems—and this applies to Metro West as well—should be compatible with so that there is more flexibility in the future.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: That sounds like a bit of common sense. I was curious about getting the pipeline to get the fuel to Western Sydney airport. I am curious as to how you think it should get there—where from and to where.

DAVID LEVINSON: I'm sorry. I don't have any opinions.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: No idea? Okay. You have discussed a lot of T-ways expanding to the south-west, to the Leppington area and to the Parramatta-Wetherill Park area. Do you want to expand on any of that?

DAVID LEVINSON: The first point is there needs to be planning for T-ways, ultimately on separate right of ways, but, initially, probably just on existing roads if it takes too long to get the right of ways up in place, so that people from Liverpool, let's say, have a direct connection to the airport, or Parramatta have a direct connection to the airport, or Penrith have a direct connection to the airport, or Leppington or Campbelltown, before some of these train lines are built. The FAST Corridor—Fifteenth Avenue busway corridor—is an obvious one that there has been some planning work on, but there would need to be some road construction to finish that. I don't think any of those things will be finished by 2026, but the buses should be running, construction should be signalled and, if not ground broken, at least property acquisition and things like that in process so that people understand that is something that is real as opposed to something that has been promised and not delivered.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: So seeing some urgency on delivery starting?

DAVID LEVINSON: Yes. I don't think there are going to be a lot of people from Liverpool who are going to take public transit to the airport if you don't have direct bus connections, because they are not going to go up to the main line and then transfer to the T1 and then transfer to the T9—the same from Leppington. The South West Rail Link Extension isn't going to be open by then, even if you decided today to do that. But you have people who would be working in that area—this is especially important for people who are airport workers as

much as airport passengers. Make sure that people build in the expectation that there is reliable public transport to that location, otherwise everyone is going to be driving, and you are going to be building that in for decades.

The CHAIR: Just going back to the uplift on when the airport will be functional, the idea that there will be 10 million passengers going through a year is something that is not likely to happen. It is not going to happen day one, that is for sure. There has always been this dynamic about whether it will be a freight airport or a passenger airport and how much of what will be going on there. Do you think that the idea that it is likely to deal more with freight than passengers, particularly in the early days, is something that the Government has not given due consideration to given the amount of industrial land around there and the infrastructure that supports that, or do you think that the infrastructure that has gone in so far supports where you would see the first two or three years of operation of the airport going?

DAVID LEVINSON: I don't think there will be that many passengers in the early years. The Liverpool CBD is as far from the Western Sydney airport as it is from the Sydney CBD. It's a very long distance, and there is not a lot of population that's west of Liverpool—yet, relatively speaking. There is more land there that is yet to be developed than east of Liverpool, I'll put it that way. So I think you would be getting more freight traffic, but a lot of freight traffic is in the belly of passenger jets. There are a few freight flights a day, perhaps, into Sydney airport, but there are not dozens of hundreds of freight flights per day into Sydney airport. Freight is combined with passenger service in how it's delivered and it's much more cost-effective that way, and that's how you can get a one-day turnaround on international logistics. Will there be distribution centres located in Western Sydney? Sure. Land is cheaper and these take up a lot of land. These distribution centres will be highly automated, there won't be a lot of workers there, so what you need is the ability to move some number of trucks in and out per day. If they have roads, they can do that.

I think there are roads now that allow them to do that, and if they start demanding more roads then we can start building more roads after they start actually putting in their warehouses that demand the roads. But you can look at the backups at the Port of Sydney, which are real and here today and have been around for a long, long time, that haven't been fully resolved, to see that there are a lot of headaches that logistic shippers are going to put up with if they have to. So what you need to do and what you would like to do are different things. If people find that it is more cost-effective to ship to Western Sydney airport and distribute from there than the existing Sydney airport, they will do that, and if road construction is really important to them, they'll put up some money and do some of that road construction themselves or work out a deal with the Government in order to help fund and accelerate that, if the demand is high enough.

The CHAIR: But the heavy lifting, the large-scale investment in roads, has been around the existing Sydney airport not the newer airport, you would have to say, with the M8, the new M6, the airport extension from Alexandria that will go directly across to the domestic and international terminals?

DAVID LEVINSON: Yes, there has been a lot of construction, certainly. Some of it is open; not all of it is open yet. The Port of Sydney still has huge traffic demands that aren't served by motorway. But there is motorway construction in Western Sydney in that area as well. My sense of it is, well, when the roads that are under construction are open there will be a lot of capacity out there and it won't be fully utilised on day one.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: I'm not sure if this is your area of expertise, but flipping the freight conversation around to exports, I have had anecdotal chats with primary producers in that part of the world who tell me that they ship their goods and produce up the coast, refine it there, ship it up to Brisbane and fly it out because it is much more efficient than going to Sydney airport. Is that something you're familiar with? We've spoken about the issues with incoming freight, but what about outgoing freight?

DAVID LEVINSON: I don't know about that particular example. I would find it hard to believe that it's cheaper to ship to Brisbane Airport and fly it out of there than to ship to Sydney, but if their processing plants are closer to Brisbane then that would make sense. Right? So I think there is a context there about they're not going to be moving their food refining and other types of material from wherever it's located now to Western Sydney, necessarily, and certainly not on day one. If they come to you with a specific proposal then, at that point, maybe it would be worth responding to.

A lot of the infrastructure development is being done on spec. It is being done in the hope that all of this is going to happen or people are saying, "Yeah, I'll probably do something like that," without there being actual money coming over from the other side—the landowners who are going to benefit greatly from all of this infrastructure and capacity, if it's useful. I think that if it's valuable to them then there should be some sort of value-capture or value-sharing arrangement where they put up some of the money for the infrastructure that they say they want. It can be over a period of years, but it will be contractual. In exchange, the infrastructure gets built, as opposed to building it in advance on the hope that they might then at that point build a distribution centre, a food refinery or whatever it is they're planning on doing there.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: I just wanted to unpack a little bit further your point on warehousing and high automation in warehousing. I know this is perhaps a little bit outside of your area of expertise, but what are your thoughts on the proposed amount of jobs that are going to be available in the immediate area around the aerotropolis versus this freight logistics component?

DAVID LEVINSON: My sense is that the forecasts for employment are a bit optimistic. I'd be very wary of looking at forecasts for any of this right now. Since 2020 we've gone through a lot of changes in the economy that were hard to predict, and we've got a lot of changes yet to be fully resolved in the economy before we get to some new equilibrium state. Office work has changed a lot. There is a lot less commuting into the office and a lot less demand for office space than there was. That hasn't fully shaken out yet. Automation is coming on board in so many jobs that previously required people—not just factory jobs, of course, but office jobs as well will be automated in various forms. I suspect that if I were building a distribution centre and I were in that kind of business, I would be planning for a largely automated centre with maybe some human oversight, rather than something like you might have imagined from 30 years ago where there would be a lot of people moving boxes around.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: By extension, I take on board your point that the people who own these facilities would be interested in co-contributing to infrastructure around it. Would that be better placed as road or rail, do you think?

DAVID LEVINSON: I think, for most of them, it would be road, in that they would likely be looking for freight logistics trucking rather than freight rail for most of the things that they're doing. Rail is important for moving commodities long distance. I think most of that distribution will be within the Sydney Basin and therefore will be by truck.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: So from a road design point of view, particularly for the areas surrounding the airport, would you think that the infrastructure should be designed more to cater for freight than passenger vehicles?

DAVID LEVINSON: All the roads will serve both kinds of uses. That's the advantage of it. There might be a very specific place where you'd have a freight-only road. There are a few of those in the world, but there are not too many because you generally don't have enough freight traffic to justify that. But in terms of design standards and expectations, you probably would be leaning more towards freight than you would in other parts of the city.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: So wider, with bigger parking bays, bigger turning circles and things like that?

DAVID LEVINSON: Yes, you'd have to think about that. Of course, that depends on exactly where you're located. Getting you from the motorway system onto the streets where the distribution centres are and, again, knowing about the context and how the design is actually set up—in a neighbourhood that's residential I don't think you'd want to be doing that, but in a neighbourhood that was primarily industrial estates then that would make sense.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: My understanding—again, just to take up on a point you just made—is that there's no access to the M12 motorway from where are likely to be the heaviest points of freight. Do you have a view on that?

DAVID LEVINSON: I don't have a specific view on that, but it sounds like it would be leaving money on the table, which seems unlike the people who would be building it.

The CHAIR: Unfortunately, we've run out of time. Thank you for appearing before the Committee today. You will be provided with a copy of the transport of today's proceedings for corrections. Committee staff will also email any questions taken on notice from today and any supplementary questions from the Committee. We kindly ask that you return these answers within 14 days. Thank you so much for coming in today.

(The witness withdrew.)

Mrs ALISON DENCH, Resident, affirmed and examined

The CHAIR: I welcome our next witness, Mrs Alison Dench. Thank you for appearing before the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure today to give evidence. Can you please confirm that you have been issued with the inquiry terms of reference and information about the standing orders that relate to the examination of witnesses?

ALISON DENCH: Yes, I have.

The CHAIR: Do you have any questions about that information?

ALISON DENCH: No, not at all.

The CHAIR: Would you like to make a short opening statement before we ask you any questions?

ALISON DENCH: I would love to, if I could. Thank you. I'd like to, in the spirit of reconciliation, acknowledge the traditional custodians of country, the Gadigal of the Eora nation, which we're meeting on today. I pay my respects to Elders past and present, and extend that to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who may be in the room today. My submission underscores, really, the importance of inclusive development—equitable access to public services to deliver vital transport infrastructure supporting the Western Sydney International Airport and Western Sydney Aerotropolis. Addressing socio-economic disparities within our communities in Western Sydney is paramount given the historical resource allocation disparities that hinder economic growth and exacerbate inequalities.

While the new international airport and Western Sydney Aerotropolis projects hold promise for economic growth, I have really grave concerns about the current state of critical transport infrastructure necessary to support this. Business cases for infrastructure projects remain incomplete, with limited commitment to implementation, leading to delays and uncertainty of essential transportation links. The deficiencies in local bus routes, particularly in frequency and operating hours, highlighted by the recent New South Wales Bus Industry Taskforce cast doubt on the effectiveness of any new transportation connections. Transportation shortcomings not only impede economic growth but also contribute to social injustice and exclusion. Limited access to services and jobs due to inadequate infrastructure further exacerbates inequalities in the region. Moreover, safety, security and environmental concerns arise from restricted access and potential traffic congestion.

Since putting the submission to the Committee, the recent Federal budget allocations have delivered a short sigh of relief. The allocation of the \$1.9 billion to vital Western Sydney roads linked to the new international airport and the aerotropolis at Mamre Road, Elizabeth Drive, Garfield Road East, Memorial Avenue and Appin Road are welcome, and also the additional \$100 million pledge earmarked for zero emission rapid bus infrastructure linking Penrith, Liverpool and Campbelltown to the new international airport and surrounding aerotropolis is a good start. Equally significant was a further allocation for Western Sydney road planning—a crucial step in ensuring that infrastructure keeps pace with the region's burgeoning population.

Yet while these initiatives represent progress, they barely scratch the surface of the challenges ahead. The impending impact of the new international airport necessitates a more comprehensive approach to infrastructure upgrades. I have really grave concerns over the strain on ratepayers' pockets in Western Sydney. I've been one of those who may have to sacrifice essential services as resources are diverted to local road upgrades and repairs, caused by construction work and also heightened traffic congestion caused by the new airport and aerotropolis. Moreover, there's an urgent need for assurance regarding the longevity of these commitments. Urgent assurance is needed regarding the longevity, especially amidst funding uncertainties and recent events like the withdrawal of the Federal funding for the M7-M12 interchange.

This raises doubts about the stability of funding streams and project timelines, which pose significant risks and erode public confidence—it's eroded my confidence as a resident—in the development and delivery process of critical infrastructure. Clarification and steadfast commitment are really imperative to navigate these challenges effectively. I urge the Committee to address quality infrastructure outcomes, focusing on inclusivity, particularly in addressing public transport inequities impacting residents' access to the airport and the aerotropolis; the prioritisation of the north-south rail line from St Marys to Macarthur; and a review of the rapid bus network between Campbelltown, Narellan, Oran Park and the Western Sydney Aerotropolis.

I urge you to look at the escalating growth impacts in Western Sydney and equitable resource allocation to enable access to the airport, particularly for workers. We need to factor in where people live and social impacts to cost-benefit analysis of critical transport infrastructure projects, which often isn't done at all. The integration of employment hubs with transport and residential areas, along with evidence-based resource allocations that deliver

better health and wellbeing outcomes for people in the region, will create a more inclusive society. We need innovative solutions and beyond business-as-usual funding for us to be successful.

The essential collaboration between local governments is missing to ensure that coordinated road works and infrastructure maintenance happens. That is something that has been overlooked. The reclassification of certain roads is crucial to ensure the facilitation of adequate maintenance of these roads in the long term. Who has responsibility for them? Otherwise, it's going to fall straight back into ratepayers' pockets, and local governments are going to have to pick up a lot of the maintenance and repairs of these roads.

Collaborative partnerships and inclusive policy frameworks are crucial for prioritising the needs of disadvantaged communities and maximising the benefits of infrastructure planning for the airport. This entails implementing better systems to address public-private partnerships. Have a look at the tolls and how that has been a bit of a nightmare. How have we benefited from that as a citizen or resident? It also entails implementing a better system for value capture mechanisms, as well as incorporating corporate social responsibility practices into public-private partnerships. By fostering these partnerships between government agencies, non-profit organisations, the private sector, community groups and residents, we can leverage collective expertise. Everybody should be involved in how we are developing and shaping our new airport and access to it.

The efficient fuel supply is a real concern, including fuel pipelines and intermodal facilities, which are necessary to support the airport and reduce reliance on fuel tanker trucks, which pose safety hazards and contribute to road congestion. I urge you to think about the voices of marginalised and vulnerable populations and ensure that these voices are heard and valued in the provision of critical infrastructure, particularly those who are often overlooked or silenced due to systemic barriers. The essential resources that are needed within government departments are also critical. I'm advocating for the establishment of a special taskforce for critical transport infrastructure planning and delivery so that someone is driving it and keeping oversight of it.

To effectively accommodate the projected population growth in Western Sydney and the significant impact of the new international airport, substantial upgrades to existing roads and the development of new roadways are imperative. They are crucial for managing the anticipated increase in traffic volume and congestion. Western Sydney's population surge is outpacing the rest of New South Wales. We need to ensure accessibility to the new international airport. This is paramount, particularly for residents in disadvantaged communities seeking employment opportunities and essential services. We need to address funding uncertainties, enhance transparency, foster collaboration and prioritise public transport accessibility. These are essential steps in the successful development of critical transport infrastructure to support the aerotropolis. I really want to thank the Committee for considering my submission and I value the opportunity to give evidence. I also thank you for this inquiry into critical infrastructure supporting the new airport in Western Sydney—the wonderful "Bird", as we know it—and hope the voices of our most vulnerable are considered in your findings and recommendations.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much, Alison. Before we go on, I wish to inform you that you may wish to take a question on notice and provide the Committee with an answer in writing within 14 days after receiving that question, if you want to. Yesterday the Government announced that they would be putting Infrastructure NSW in to oversight and tackle the roadblocks so there is a more coordinated approach. I don't know if you had a chance to look at that—you have a very detailed submission—and whether that will answer some of the problems that people have had where you're getting shoved around from department to department and things are getting siloed?

ALISON DENCH: It's a great approach and a good step in the right direction when it comes to a coordinated approach within State government. How about a coordinated approach across State, Federal and local government, and also with residents? It's a good step forward for State government to get itself organised. There are more stakeholders at stake here than just State government. That's why I'm urging a taskforce or something where all players are at the table and all players are kept in the loop so there's a broader, coordinated approach to how we are delivering critical infrastructure. State government cannot do it on its own. It's a step in the right direction, but I think there needs to be more collaboration on a broader expanse.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Your submission stated—and you said this in your opening comments—that the business cases relating to critical infrastructure are often incomplete. We've heard other evidence to suggest that perhaps too much time and money has been spent on overcooking high-level business cases, detailed business cases, scoping studies, concept designs and detailed designs, and that by the time you get around to building a road or a train line, it has been 12 years and several hundreds of millions of dollars. I just want to weigh up some of the comments we've had before around that, and also your statement about business cases being incomplete. Getting that balance right between money on delivery and money on planning—how are we doing there?

ALISON DENCH: Planning is important. However, as John Lennon said once, "Life is what happens when we're busy making plans," isn't it? Often these business cases, in their development, get left behind as to

what happens. I see that we need business case development, but we also need to ensure that it's not just feasibility study after feasibility study. We need business cases—this is why I'm talking about them being incomplete—that are actually saying what we're going to build and how we're going to build it, not if we need to build it. We also need to take into account the cost of not doing it, and that is the cost of inequity and the social and socio-economic outcomes that are happening in the area. They don't even get cost-factored into those business cases.

If it was, there would be a no-brainer that we need to build it, and build it soon, and build it quickly. It has been left behind because we are often tripping over ourselves all the time around feasibility after feasibility. We know we need the infrastructure. We know we need to get it done. There is a need for a north-south rail link. We just need to build it. We don't need another feasibility study of what, where. We've got the corridor. Those things have been sorted out. We just need to get on and get those cases done and, at the same time, look at how it impacts upon our communities by not doing it. You'll find that we just need to move forward and do it.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: I want to focus a little bit on the north-south connection by rail. In your view, how will extending the train line from Leppington to the airport and extending—quite specifically, you've said Schofield to Tallawong on the metro. By extension to that, could you offer comment on Tallawong to St Marys? How is that necessary in ensuring equity?

ALISON DENCH: It will enable more access to public transport and transport infrastructure for people out along that way and get people off the roads. If you build that north-south spine, you are building a trunk. You are building something that then can expand out for people to actually make short trips or have other ways in which to connect to a main rail line that can get them from one end of Western Sydney to the other. People travel within Western Sydney and not from Western Sydney to Sydney. They travel within. Building those lines will enable a trunk to enable people to actually access—to be able to get to work, to get to school, to get to universities and get them off the roads. That is where I see it is important for us to be looking at those particular issues. I don't know if I have answered your question. I'm happy to take it further on notice.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: In the context of this, we are talking about the aerotropolis. More broadly, we have heard many submissions about that north-south metro connection between Tallawong and St Marys and St Marys through to the aerotropolis and then continuing further south, and the importance of it.

ALISON DENCH: It is critical, otherwise you are going to have an airport without anybody being able to access right through to Western Sydney. It will be a little lone island. There is more infrastructure that is needed. Those lines are very important again for freight as well and to get freight off the road. If you want to make Western Sydney airport a bit of a freight airport, you need to connect down to Port Kembla. The Maldon-Dombarton line is a critical piece, too, to connect back up through that north-south line to enable it to be a good freight option and enable more economic growth in the south-west area. That line will enable that to happen. It will enable people to get to jobs, to employment, to education and to essential services. The Western Sydney airport is a catalyst for major economic growth and stimulation for this part of Sydney that has been left behind and left out in comparison to other areas in Sydney.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Following that freight line from Port Kembla through to the airport, do you see that as essentially inbound from the port to the airport and then outbound from the airport out? How do you see that freight connection? As has been noted, it is quite different freight that would come by sea versus that that would go by air. What is the connection or correlation between those two?

ALISON DENCH: You might not even think of what some of those options may well be. If you have that connection and those linkages for exports and imports, it will help with our economic development opportunities within the south-west area. Like anything, if it was all connected up, options are boundless if you were able to allow those connections to happen.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I was just sitting and thinking that we have been talking about the aerotropolis and all the different lines in and out and what is efficient. I am stretching out from there. We have been talking about housing shortages across Sydney in particular. I am wondering, if we got some of those transport hubs or transport lines to the aerotropolis, whether there would be opportunities for housing along those lines or increased housing along there? When we are actually looking at the critical infrastructure of the aerotropolis, are we just solely thinking of the benefits of the aerotropolis or what are the other benefits to housing shortage or those communities? Obviously I think of the south-west direction because that is where I come from. But along those rail corridors, what other opportunities besides the aerotropolis would there be?

ALISON DENCH: There are mega opportunities by putting in a north-south rail line and connecting people up to the airport. There has not been a major piece of infrastructure like this built since the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Honestly, it would open up so much for this area when it comes to economic development opportunities and it would definitely open up housing along the rail line. It makes more sense. Currently we are such a

car-dependent area. The only way we are going to get people off the roads and using public transport, which has a lot more healthier outcomes for communities than sitting in traffic congestion and competing with freight on the roads—I worry about those fuel tankers that are going to be on the road. We're talking about rapid bus connections. That's going to be using the roads. Everything we're relying upon is on the roads, and it's so difficult to move around now as it is. That would just open up so much opportunity for changing those economic disparities and long-term historical inequities that happen throughout Western Sydney because of the lack of infrastructure that's been put in place.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I was wondering whether the airport is the catalyst for something that should've been there in the first place—the full north-south corridor through Western Sydney. I don't know what you think about that, but I'm wondering whether the airport is the catalyst for something that should actually have been there in the first place.

ALISON DENCH: It's highlighting what should've been there in the first place, definitely. It certainly is going to create so much more opportunity for our communities in south-west Sydney, and in Western Sydney in general, if we were to put in place that north-south rail link.

The CHAIR: It's a "build it and they will come" philosophy. If they've got the rail links, they'll build the houses.

ALISON DENCH: We also have to look at the fact it's been such a car-dependent community for so long there may well be some lag. Yes, build it and they will come but we also need to be looking at how we can educate people that it's a more healthy and a better wellbeing outcome for them using public transport rather than just jumping in a car. It's going to help us towards zero emissions. It's going to help us with better environmental outcomes as well as social and economic outcomes for our communities.

The CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee today. You will be provided with a copy of the transcript of today's proceedings for corrections. The Committee staff will also email any questions taken on notice from today and any supplementary questions from the Committee. We kindly ask that you return these answers within 14 days.

ALISON DENCH: Again, thank you so much for the opportunity to be able to talk to you.

(The witness withdrew.)

Dr GEORGE GREISS, Mayor, Campbelltown City Council, sworn and examined

Ms LINDY DEITZ, General Manager, Campbelltown City Council, sworn and examined

The CHAIR: I welcome our next witnesses. Thank you for appearing before the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure today to give evidence. Can you please confirm that you have each been issued with the inquiry's terms of reference and information about the standing orders that relate to the examination of witnesses?

LINDY DEITZ: I can confirm that, yes.

GEORGE GREISS: Yes.

The CHAIR: Do you have any questions about this information?

GEORGE GREISS: No.

LINDY DEITZ: No.

The CHAIR: Would you like to make a short opening statement before we ask questions?

GEORGE GREISS: Thank you for the opportunity to appear before this critical inquiry. Campbelltown is a city of ambition, innovation and opportunity; however, it remains isolated from the Western Sydney International Airport and the aerotropolis. As the metropolitan centre of the Macarthur region, Campbelltown is supporting one of Australia's fastest growing areas. We are supporting nearly 50 per cent of the population growth in the Western Parkland City and over 10 per cent of the metropolitan Sydney housing growth within the next five years. However, without adequate investment and the physical and social infrastructure, our community continues to suffer from longstanding investment backlog. Projects in eastern Sydney, Parramatta and the north-west have taken precedence, leaving our region's needs unmet.

It is critical that the Western Sydney airport truly serves the people of Western Sydney. It must be seen as an airport for Western Sydney, not merely an airport located in Western Sydney. The airport and aerotropolis have long been heralded as solutions to the employment divide between the eastern and the western, where many workers commute east for jobs due to a lack of local employment opportunities in Western Sydney. As an employment hub with over 200,000 jobs, the airport and aerotropolis should be catalysts for local economic growth, connecting our agricultural and smart manufacturing sectors to international supply chains. To realise these benefits and reverse the under-provision of employment and services in Western Sydney, and to prevent further entrenchment of economic and social disadvantage, the aerotropolis must be connected to the region through suitable and efficient transport infrastructure.

I believe there are three categories of users we need to consider for suitable transport infrastructure when we are talking about the future: workers, travellers and freight. First and most importantly, we must address the needs of the workers undertaking the 200,000 promised jobs. These jobs will not effectively address the region's employment deficit without giving adequate access to the south-western Sydney workforce. High-quality public transport connections are essential. We need a north-south metro from Western Sydney airport to Campbelltown and Macarthur and a rail extension from Glenfield to Western Sydney airport. These links will connect Macarthur to the airport and facilitate connectivity between both of Sydney's airports through Glenfield.

These critical links were committed for investigation in 2018 as part of the Western Sydney City Deal. We understand that business cases are underway, but there has been no commitment to delivering this vital infrastructure. Currently there is a heavy reliance on car travel in the region, with over 110,000 cars owned by Macarthur residents and 63.8 per cent of homes owning two cars or more. In Campbelltown alone, private vehicle usage dominates most trips. According to the 2016 census data, 66 per cent of all travel to work was by private vehicle, 17 per cent by train and only 1 per cent by bus. The Australian Automobile Association's Transport Affordability Index suggests that typical annual vehicle costs in Sydney amount to approximately \$25,600 per year. These costs disproportionately impact our households due to owning more vehicles and traveling longer distances for employment. This is a further imposed cost to our community, many of which are already struggling.

The median household income for Campbelltown LGA is \$1,700 per week, compared to Greater Sydney's \$2,077. In 2021 nearly one-quarter of Campbelltown households may be classified as experiencing mortgage stress. The lack of infrastructure is further disadvantaging our community, not only financially, but also impacting their travel time due to congestion on our road network. The ramifications of heightened private vehicle usage have a particularly pronounced effect on councils such as Campbelltown, in contrast to other local government areas that enjoy robust public transport infrastructure and services.

Campbelltown council currently allocates a recurrent budget of approximately \$19 million per annum for road maintenance, on top of other road funding grants we receive from the Australian or New South Wales governments. Furthermore, there are approximately 30,000 square metres of prime council-owned land sterilised by car parking each day in the Campbelltown CBD. Not only is our community missing out on funds that could be better allocated for their services, the State is also missing out on significant high-density opportunities in the Campbelltown CBD as a result of the inadequate public transport network.

We must provide our community with an attractive alternative to car travel and improved access to public transport. Without significant and immediate infrastructure investment, our community will have no choice but to access the new airport by car, or not access it at all. We understand that building the full north-south rail metro and the connection to Glenfield cannot happen overnight, even if the budget is allocated, which it is not. Therefore, as an interim solution, we were promised a rapid bus service. However, recent announcements from Transport for NSW promote "local bus service enhancements" rather than a rapid bus.

The connection between Campbelltown and the new airport commits buses every 30 minutes and a journey of 66 minutes each way. This service might be sufficient for some travellers accessing the airport. However, it's definitely inadequate, infrequent and too slow for the 200,000-plus employees that have to travel there each day. If these employment opportunities were afforded to our community, they need better access. We also have to be careful when we consider the patronage of this bus service in our future planning for public transport access. If this bus service patronage data is used as a baseline for a metro business case, I don't envisage that we could ever justify an investment in metro. This is not because the metro is not warranted; it is because the data would be based upon a flawed service.

We are seeking significant and immediate infrastructure investment in a true rapid bus service that is fast, reliable, frequent and direct. With these critical connections, we can then address the last-mile issues. The public transport network is critical for improved access to employment opportunities and sustainable lifestyles. This is critical for equity, not just for Campbelltown but for all of Western Sydney.

I don't want to take too much more time. I want to end by saying that the success of the airport and aerotropolis in creating the envisioned economic benefits and employment opportunities cannot happen without sufficient investment in the road network also. We have heard about the number of trucks transporting fuel that are required for the airport to function. Combining that with the freight opportunities and impact of private vehicles without a sufficiently upgraded road network is a recipe for disaster. Thank you, Madam Chair. I commend Campbelltown City Council's written submission to the Committee and welcome the members' questions.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Before we begin the questions, I wish to inform you that you may wish to take a question on notice and provide the Committee with an answer in writing within 14 days after receiving the questions. I just want to take you back to your comments about the rail. If I understood your short statement, the heavy rail from the Leppington line through, and the metro, would be your preferred option—extending to Macarthur and Campbelltown. Is that correct?

GEORGE GREISS: Yes. Our main concern has got to be that between Glenfield and the airport there has to be a continuous mode of transport. Whether that continuous mode will continue to have the route from Leppington to the airport, or whether we replace the whole line from Glenfield to the airport with the metro, either/or will work, as long as it's a continuous mode of transport.

The CHAIR: As long as there's an extension.

GEORGE GREISS: Yes, because if you have to change three times, it's an unlikely scenario that it'll be a successful endeavour.

The CHAIR: Did you ever get an explanation of why, in the original announcement, as part of the city deal, the Berejiklian and Turnbull governments only announced the line from St Marys to the aerotropolis rather than what they did with metro west, which is announce the whole line? Was there any justification given for why you wouldn't announce the line at least going through to Narellan and Campbelltown?

GEORGE GREISS: No, there was no actual justification given to us. I wasn't a part of the city deal negotiation. I wasn't one of the people in the room that had the privilege of negotiating such a deal. But there was no announcement or any clear classification as to why that choice was made or why that connection was not announced at the time.

The CHAIR: Lindy, you looked like you wanted to add something.

LINDY DEITZ: Madam Chair, I was with the journey of city deals from the very beginning. The decision to go north, from all appearances, was not a decision made on data or any basis of evidence, as Macarthur

at that time was the fastest growing region in Australia—Camden being the fastest growing LGA in Australia. The impression was given that it was a political decision to go north as opposed to going south. There was no explanation given. It did not seem to match any of the transport criteria. The decision to go north did not make any sense in terms of data or evidence presented.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Do you think it would be of benefit to this Committee, and perhaps the taxpayers of New South Wales, if we were able to get our hands on the business case?

LINDY DEITZ: Absolutely. I have fundamentally asked the question over and over in my journey with the city deals as to why you would not connect a 24-hour international airport to the fastest growing region in Australia. It just didn't make any sense to me from the very beginning. We are the fastest growing region. We don't have access. Yes, I do understand that it is an expensive exercise because there was no futureproofing, so to speak. The development was allowed to occur, and it will now need, largely, tunnelling. There used to be a train that existed between Camden and Campbelltown. To me, I couldn't—I'm no traffic engineer or transport engineer, so I do say this with a degree of lack of education in that space. But it already existed once before. Why wouldn't we just put that in place? The south-west, the Macarthur region, is clearly the fastest growing area. It has, and continues to have, enormous potential.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Unfortunately, we're not going to get a rail line day one. We are going to get buses. There was a comment made earlier that it could potentially be quicker to get a bus from Campbelltown to the existing airport than from Campbelltown to Western Sydney airport, which seems pretty extraordinary.

GEORGE GREISS: To get from Campbelltown, at the moment, to the airport by train takes about 45 minutes with a good run in the morning. By bus—again, if there's no traffic—you could probably get there in less than an hour.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Sorry, it might have been quicker by train than by bus.

GEORGE GREISS: To the airport, it's definitely quicker.

The CHAIR: It's quicker to get to the existing airport by train than to try to get across by bus to the airport.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: In terms of these buses that are starting on day one from Campbelltown, have you had any input on the route? Because I'm thinking get on at Campbelltown station, jump on the Hume Highway, M7-M12. Surely it couldn't take more than 30 minutes in good traffic. Have you had any input? Would you like to make input?

GEORGE GREISS: I definitely would like to make an input. My understanding is—and, again, Lindy can clarify this—as part of the original city deal negotiations, there were significant talks around the bus routes and how the rapid bus system will work. They sort of spent a bit of time investigating some of these issues, but, sadly, for the last 2½ years I have been the mayor, I have not had any input into any connection to the airport.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: I'm from the north-west so I'm happy to have a conversation about the difference between percentage growth and actual population growth, and who's experiencing most of that. But putting that aside, what effect do you think the airport will have on employment movements in and out of the LGA?

GEORGE GREISS: At the moment about 62 per cent of all of our residents leave the LGA every morning; about 67-odd per cent of all white-collar workers leave the LGA every morning. So as employment continues to grow and as our population continues to grow, I assume there will be a lot of people heading from Campbelltown—we hope there'll be a lot of people heading from Campbelltown—to work in the new airport. It is a significant employment generator for Sydney, if we rely on the as-promised 200,000 jobs. So there will be a significant number of people travelling to the airport every day for work.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: What is the distance from Campbelltown to the aerotropolis versus Campbelltown to Kingsford Smith?

GEORGE GREISS: From Campbelltown to the aerotropolis is about 29 or 30 kilometres. From Campbelltown to Kingsford Smith, I'll say it's probably around the same. It might be slightly longer to Kingsford Smith.

LINDY DEITZ: The lived experience in Campbelltown for community is that they can hop on a train at Macarthur or Campbelltown station and go directly to the domestic and international airports, and the lived experience from our community is you will see them hop on that train with their suitcases and their families and that's the way they go. The regions of Wingecarribee and Wollondilly generally will get family to drop them off at the station and they do exactly the same thing. The roads have had no futureproofed strategic planning done to

them. We can answer the question in terms of kilometres, but for me to get from Campbelltown City Council Civic Centre to the M31 some days can take me 40 minutes because the roads have not been futureproofed, and that is why we cannot have rapid buses. There is no ability to put a rapid bus lane on the roads leading out from Campbelltown to the new Western Sydney airport.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Yes, it's the same story in the north-west.

GEORGE GREISS: It's 35 kilometres, for accuracy. I have just Googled it. It's 29.8 and 35, something like that, so very close.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: We just heard earlier that Liverpool is basically equidistant from both, and we have also heard evidence that a lot of the proposed job numbers are frankly fanciful of what the realisation is going to be at the airport. I'm just curious as to why there's the expectation that there'll be so many more people heading to the airport as opposed to heading in towards the city.

GEORGE GREISS: Whether the airport realises the fanciful number of jobs that has been sold to us, that it's going to create, or not, I'm not sure. But what we do know is if there are jobs being created there, we do hope to get our fair share of them for our employment and for our residents that are currently struggling to get into Macquarie Park and some of the more further areas that, again, we can't access properly. I will not comment on the 200,000 jobs that will be created because I think there is probably a little bit of a fancy there in how many jobs the airport will be able to create and how long it will take for us to hit that. But regardless of that number, we need to have access to make sure that our residents are not continuing to be disadvantaged.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: Two questions. The first one is in the city deal—and I was there, just for everybody's information, and, yes, I believe it was political because we only had to look at State and Federal that we had representing in the city deal—was it not indicated that whilst the agreement was that St Marys to the aerotropolis would be stage one, stage two would definitely be followed up with the aerotropolis to Campbelltown?

LINDY DEITZ: That is my understanding. A lot of the promises of the city deals have not been fulfilled. We were guaranteed our community's access to that airport. Given the disadvantage in our community, that is highly unlikely. We have significant advanced manufacturing opportunities to connect to that airport, but the road infrastructure will not enable that. The percentage of our community that cannot afford to own a car will not be able to access it and will continue to come into Sydney's CBD for employment opportunities and travel.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I have two more questions. The people from Illawarra, do they not travel through your area if they were going to the aerotropolis?

LINDY DEITZ: Illawarra is one of the greatest regions that we share employment opportunities with. A lot of people from the Macarthur region go to the Illawarra and we employ a lot of Illawarra people in Campbelltown. The basis that the eight mayors agreed on in signing the city deal was that we wanted Western Sydney to be connected to Western Sydney. So if Wollondilly residents wanted to access jobs in Penrith, they could. If we wanted to access jobs in Liverpool, we could. But, unfortunately, the critical infrastructure that is required to enable that easy access to employment, whether it be at the airport and the aerotropolis or each other, has not come to fruition.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: My last question is to Mayor Greiss. You talked about the sterilisation of particular lands that are taken up by car spaces, and you talk about the number of residents in your area that catch the train. Who parks in your car parks?

GEORGE GREISS: A lot of our car parks are full of residents from Camden and Wollondilly. Last time we did some sort of analysis, and somewhere around 65 per cent of all car park users in Campbelltown are from outside the LGA.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: Would it be fair to say that that any transport—rail or bus—from your LGA would probably support not only your own residents but others?

GEORGE GREISS: Definitely. If we can connect Campbelltown to the rest of Western Sydney, it will not only support Campbelltown; it will support all the people of Camden and all the people of Macarthur in general. That's the point I was trying to get across. Campbelltown—we are the city centre for the Macarthur region. We do have the biggest hospital, we do have the university and we do have the connection to the heavy rail. By connecting Campbelltown, not only do we connect Campbelltown but we connect the rest of Macarthur, because then it becomes a smaller trip for them to be able to reach some of these options. At the moment if you tried to get from Wollondilly to the airport, I don't see how you could do it using public transport at all.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Very expensive Uber.

GEORGE GREISS: Yes.

The CHAIR: Essentially, we're getting a couple of pictures here. One is the aerotropolis and what it may or may not deliver, but there's also the fundamental question of the movements across the city and whether they're north-south and east-west—and once you get to a certain point, they're north-south. That would be true with connecting Campbelltown to Narellan to Oran Park—to that region—and then out to Penrith and Liverpool across to Parramatta. When they were putting forward the airport to you—obviously there was a city deal and obviously an airport has social impacts as well, particularly when you're running a 24-hour airport and you've signed on to an agreement—what were they projecting would be moved out of that airport? What kind of freight? What kinds of passenger numbers? Where were the flights going? What were they bringing in? What were they taking out? Was there any justification for the base case for the airport itself? Probably Lindy, who was there, would have a better idea.

LINDY DEITZ: I'd possibly have to take a portion of that question on notice in terms of giving you the actual data. Certainly, it was sold to us in terms of the opportunities, particularly for Macarthur in terms of agriculture food to plate. We were sold very much that our role in making this airport successful was the advanced manufacturing agricultural components of our region that would add great benefit to that airport. We were certainly led to believe that, being a 24-hour airport, it would be the airport of choice for export-import. Beyond that, in terms of data, I don't think I'd feel confident giving you anything specific.

The CHAIR: So, essentially, food manufacturing?

LINDY DEITZ: That was certainly the impression that I have taken away from it. There were certainly conversations around innovation hubs and universities and so forth. Largely, for the Macarthur region, the enticement was very much around the food, agriculture and advanced manufacturing industries. That's my recollection.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: What are your thoughts on yesterday's announcement about Infrastructure NSW coming in over the top and having powers to bang the head of Sydney Water against a brick wall if it needs to—figuratively, not literally? What are your thoughts on that? What do you think that will do?

GEORGE GREISS: Any restructure of government services that enables us to get things done quicker, with one authority that we can approach to talk about those issues, is always a step forward. What's critical for us is not the restructure of the public sector; it's the commitment and the funding to get the shovels in the ground to start building this network now.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: I note that you were originally supposed to be with all of the other councils. When we had all of the other councils, I asked them this question, so I won't leave you out: If you had to pick one thing that tomorrow—actually, next Tuesday there's a budget.

GEORGE GREISS: Next Tuesday is the budget, yes.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: If there's one thing you wanted announced that would benefit your LGA and the region, what would that be?

GEORGE GREISS: A north-south metro link. That would be our number one priority.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Can I just take up on the metro link? I'm not hugely familiar with Campbelltown, so bear with me if I have got this completely wrong. When we talk about the metro line coming into Campbelltown, does it go through some of the more disadvantaged suburbs to provide them with better access to public transport? You noted that there is low car ownership and disadvantage in certain areas. Does the metro line go through there? If it doesn't, does it have the option of going through those regions on the way through? I contrast this with the north-south link where it goes from St Marys through to Schofields, and the original business case didn't have any stops through some of the suburbs like Mount Druitt, which is desperate for it. I imagine it's similar to Macquarie Fields and other suburbs.

GEORGE GREISS: The very simple answer is no, it doesn't go through any of those areas, because there's no metro line there. It doesn't exist at the moment. All we know is there is hope that, in the future, there will be a connection between Campbelltown and the airport. What direction is it going to take? What is the exact route? This has all been speculative. Hopefully, the business case—

Mr WARREN KIRBY: So there's no corridor identified?

GEORGE GREISS: No, there's no corridor identified—not in that level of detail. I would assume, if it's going to go through Narellan and connect Oran Park and all of those areas, it will be taking a very similar route to what currently is a road network. But we haven't gone to that level of detail as to where the metro is going to go, where it's going to stop and all of those things. There hasn't been that level of detail.

LINDY DEITZ: Our language where we live—we won't see metro in our lifetime. We talk about electrified versus non-electrified. We're still stuck in that part of history. I want to add something, if I may. Earlier you asked if we had been consulted about the rapid bus, and I hadn't had the opportunity to respond, but I do have some knowledge. We will be shown some of the information that they have worked on. Transport for NSW has notified us that they will have some discussions with us coming up shortly.

The CHAIR: Could I just go back to the land that it's going through. Some of the land has obviously been gazetted for future rail use. You have had no land gazetted for a future metro, a south-west link going to the aerotropolis, at all?

GEORGE GREISS: Not that I'm aware of, no.

The CHAIR: Could I ask you to take it on notice and double-check?

GEORGE GREISS: Yes, we will take that on notice.

The CHAIR: That would be great.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: I think the primary issue there is that at some point in the Camden LGA, it's going to have to go from above ground to underground, with probably a tunnel from Oran Park through to Campbelltown, which won't be cheap.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I heard that they did know it was going to go through there, or the plan was, but they allowed the houses to be built first. Then they decided, "Oh, we've gone over where we should be."

The CHAIR: They are questions we can ask Transport. Thank you very much for coming in today and giving evidence before the Committee. You will be provided with a copy of the transcript of today's proceedings for correction. The Committee staff will also email any questions taken on notice from today, and any supplementary questions from the Committee. We kindly ask that you return these answers within 14 days.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

(Short adjournment)

Ms PETA GAMON, Executive Director Western Sydney Aerotropolis, Greater Sydney, Transport for NSW, affirmed and examined

Mr ADRIAN DESSANTI, Director Public Transport, Greater Sydney, Transport for NSW, sworn and examined

Ms ANGELA JEFFERY, Project Director, Sydney Metro, sworn and examined

The CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure today to give evidence. Can you please confirm that you have each been issued with the inquiry terms of reference and information about the standing orders that relate to the examination of witnesses?

PETA GAMON: Yes.

ADRIAN DESSANTI: Yes.

ANGELA JEFFERY: Yes.

The CHAIR: Do you have any questions about this information?

PETA GAMON: No.

ADRIAN DESSANTI: No.

ANGELA JEFFERY: No.

The CHAIR: Would anyone like to make a short opening statement?

PETA GAMON: Yes, I would. Thank you for providing Transport with the opportunity to speak today. I would like to start by acknowledging that we're meeting on Gadigal country. I would also like to acknowledge the vibrant Aboriginal communities in Western Sydney, particularly the traditional custodians of the country within the aerotropolis, the Dharawal, Dharug and Gandangara people. I pay my respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people dialling in or listening in today. My name is Peta Gamon, and my area of focus is integrated transport within and supporting the aerotropolis precinct. I am joined by my colleagues Ms Angela Jeffery, who will provide information related to Sydney Metro and rail corridors, and Mr Adrian Dessanti, who will respond to questions for buses and other forms of public transport.

I would like to acknowledge the thoughtful submissions and witness contributions so far, and note the commonality of the discussions that have been held. There has been much commentary on the unprecedented rate of growth occurring across Western Sydney, recognition of the opportunities of the new airport and local employment lands and the need for continued investment to enable transport connections. Transport share these same views and ambitions. There is a significant amount of work to be done to unlock the full potential of the precinct, and we recognise that transport plays a key role in connecting people's whole lives and shaping the way communities live, work and interact. In particular, for Western Sydney, we know that transport is a crucial enabler of social equity, a strong economy and allowing economic, cultural and social opportunities to flow across communities. We take this responsibility very seriously.

We've set out a clear path on how we will deliver and support positive and sustained growth in the airport precinct, as set out in our 30-year vision, but we do acknowledge that the availability of funds is a challenge across all tiers of government with considerable pressure and competing demands. The challenge of distance and connectivity more broadly across Western Sydney is another significant element to navigate, as is the rollout of other key enabling and essential services like water, electricity, health and education. As such, and as it has been, we understand the need to progress in prioritised sustainable horizons, carefully balancing immediate critical needs while making progressive enhancements and setting foundations and momentum for future transport connectivity.

With more than \$15 billion of investment to support transport for the precinct over the last decade, we've made some great progress and are on track to have key transport connections in place for day one, for the airport opening. Amongst these we'll have road links like Bringelly Road, The Northern Road and the new M12 Motorway; a new metro; and new direct bus services connecting Penrith, Campbelltown, Liverpool, Mount Druitt, Leppington and many suburbs along the way. We welcome the recent New South Wales and Australian government announcements of an additional \$3 billion committed to support planning, development and rollout of the next tiers of integrated transport infrastructure, including upgrades to Mamre Road and Elizabeth Drive, planning for future freight and passenger rail connections and planning for increased road, bus and active transport connectivity east of the airport to support Bradfield city, the aerotropolis core and connections through to the east. This investment demonstrates government's commitment to supporting sustained growth, and

the pipeline provides the confidence the industry needs to invest in local development that will bring forward new jobs.

While there's been much emphasis in a lot of the large infrastructure projects and investments, we continue to also maintain a sharp focus on safety and reliable access of the existing network and supporting community members through the changes afoot. Safety must and will always come first. It is a paramount consideration in everything that we do. Lastly, I want to recognise the value and importance of partnering across government, industries and partnering with communities on this momentous city-shaping program. We work hand in hand with DPHI, INSW, councils, utilities, industry, and community stakeholders, leaders, advocates and individuals. These partnerships offer us insights and support and challenge ideas that help us work through, shape and activate options and priorities and programs of work that reflect the needs of the communities we serve. Transport remains committed to delivering improved connectivity that will bring the aerotropolis to life and help realise the great flow-on benefits for the people of Western Sydney and beyond.

The CHAIR: Before we move to questions from the Committee, I wish to inform you that you may, if you wish, take a question on notice and provide the Committee with an answer in writing within 14 days after receiving the questions. Can I start with something that we've had a number of different responses on: the gazetting and reservation of land through to Narellan and Campbelltown for the metro. Can you inform us if any land has been set aside and if it has been gazetted?

PETA GAMON: I might pass that question to my colleague Ms Jeffery.

ANGELA JEFFERY: The gazetting of the corridor has happened in part. The corridor from Bradfield down to Oran Park has been gazetted. Further down to Macarthur has not, except for one station. That could be a possible future station at Narellan.

The CHAIR: But what about the corridor itself? You have gazetted, I assume, the station. Have you gazetted the land?

ANGELA JEFFERY: The corridor has been gazetted from the Bradfield station, the aerotropolis station, through to Oran Park. That section of the corridor has been gazetted. Then a future station that could be located at Narellan has also been gazetted, but the distance between Oran Park down to Macarthur has not been gazetted at this stage.

The CHAIR: Why has that land not been gazetted?

ANGELA JEFFERY: There is a business case that has been funded and will be developed over the next 12 to 18 months. Part of that business case will look at the best means to deliver a future service in that area. If gazetting a corridor is required as a result of that business case, that will occur.

The CHAIR: The mayors told us that when they signed on to the city deal, fundamental to that city deal was the north-south rail connection. That was the condition on which they signed on.

ANGELA JEFFERY: As I said, the funding for that business case has been co-funded to \$100 million by both the Federal Government and the State Government. That work is underway. In 12 to 18 months the business case will be complete, in which case if a further gazetting of the corridor needs to occur, it can. In some instances, if the service is underground then the corridor doesn't necessarily need to be gazetted. That assessment will definitely be formed and evaluated as part of the business case, which I note has been funded, has started and will be complete within 12 to 18 months.

The CHAIR: Yesterday the Government made an announcement that Infrastructure NSW will now be stepping in to deal with roadblocks. One of the points that was raised earlier today by Tom, who is heading up that division, was that business case after business case—in government, if you know where you're going you don't need a lot of money and a lot of detail. You need a lot of geological details, but if you know where you're going you just get on with delivering it. What is this business case ascertaining? Is it ascertaining just the route with a commitment that it will be delivered, or is this the best option?

ANGELA JEFFERY: That business case will look at a metro extension from Bradfield down to Macarthur, but it will also include consideration of a future connection to Leppington and Glenfield, which will also take into account a heavy rail solution as well. It is broader than just connecting to one location in the south—the south being Macarthur—but then also further on across to Glenfield and Leppington.

The CHAIR: But that's an earlier spur, isn't it?

ANGELA JEFFERY: It's a business case that's being undertaken all at once, and it will consider the two southern extensions as a part of that business case.

The CHAIR: As part of that business case you're considering the Leppington continuation as possibly heavy rail rather than metro. Is that correct?

ANGELA JEFFERY: It will consider both. In that direction it will consider both heavy rail and metro, and it will look at an options analysis as a part of that business case, and it will also look at an extension down to the Macarthur alignment.

The CHAIR: Which is possibly going to be underground.

ANGELA JEFFERY: The corridor has been gazetted to Oran Park. If it requires a further gazettal of a corridor that needs to happen, that will be part of the business case assessment. One scenario where you might not continue to gazette the corridor might be if it is underground.

The CHAIR: What would be the other scenario?

ANGELA JEFFERY: It would likely be a scenario where the service is underground.

The CHAIR: You said it is one scenario. What is the other reason you wouldn't gazette?

ANGELA JEFFERY: Sorry. I'll correct that. It would be an underground service.

The CHAIR: So the only proposition looked at is whether you are doing above ground from Narellan to Macarthur or whether you are doing underground from Narellan, and that is what the business case is ascertaining.

ANGELA JEFFERY: No, we could gazette the corridor further if it was above ground. That process would be available, and that will be determined as a part of the business case.

The CHAIR: I understand that. The two options you are looking at as part of the business case are whether you go above ground or whether you go underground.

ANGELA JEFFERY: That's right.

The CHAIR: There is no other proposition you are looking at.

ANGELA JEFFERY: No, it's just above ground or below ground.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Just on the Leppington extension, that has been gazetted, and I understand that some acquisitions have taken place. Is that the case, and what's the idea there? Is it just hardship acquisitions at this stage?

ANGELA JEFFERY: I actually am not aware of any strategic acquisitions that have occurred. If I could take the question on notice with regard to hardship.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Sure. My next question is around business cases. We have been talking about business cases underway. But just on previous business cases and the business case for the initial metro from St Marys to the airport, there have been some questions today about how robust that was, whether it was the best bang for buck and how it stacked up against other options, including the extension of the Leppington line. Are you able to provide that document or table that document?

ANGELA JEFFERY: The assessment was undertaken in 2018. It looked at up to 20 station locations as part of that business case, and it evaluated the best alignment. There were several scenarios and options that were considered as part of that business case. The project that's being delivered was the preferred option and, obviously, was funded thereafter and is well into delivery.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: In terms of the best option, was it the best option in terms of where the stations would be, the best option in terms of whether you go from St Marys to airport, whether you go from airport to Leppington, or whether you go from airport to somewhere else?

ANGELA JEFFERY: The Leppington extension from the airport wasn't part of the business case where the project would connect into the T1 line. Various options were considered about where that might best occur, and St Marys was found to be the best location.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: The view of multiple witnesses and multiple submissions, and even when I am out there hitting the pavement in Leppington, is that it does not make any sense. It does not make much sense to people that we have built this existing line when what would appear on the surface to be the cheapest, most effective way to get the most people to the airport would be the extension of the Leppington line. You were saying that was never a consideration? Why was it dismissed? Who dismissed it? Why was that never considered an option?

ANGELA JEFFERY: The duration to get either to Parramatta or to the city definitely was considered for various locations. To get from the airport to Parramatta is about a 38-minute journey on the project as it's being delivered and about 70 minutes into the heart of the CBD on the project that's being delivered. That's longer in an alternate route, but the extent to which the business case looked at further extensions is subject to a business case that's now being funded and now being delivered.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: The driver behind this decision was what's best for Parramatta and not what's best for Sydney.

ANGELA JEFFERY: No, it's about, obviously, connecting to—this project will deliver many benefits. Some of those benefits are delivering 39,000 jobs in the future. It's about delivering 27,000 dwellings in the future. One of those benefits is the time and the connectivity of connecting people from Western Sydney to Western Sydney. It's a 15-minute commute from the airport to St Marys. It's a five-minute commute from the airport to the aerotropolis. If you were to look at the best way to connect the project that is being delivered to an existing heavy rail solution, it is a quicker journey time to get from the airport to St Marys, Parramatta and the city than an alternate route.

The CHAIR: But why Parramatta over Liverpool?

ANGELA JEFFERY: I couldn't comment on that.

The CHAIR: That's why we're asking why Parramatta is being identified as a key—

ANGELA JEFFERY: I'm not suggesting it is a key aspect. I'm just saying there are many, many benefits of this business case that were identified in the assessment of the business case, and largely it was about a 15-minute journey time from the existing T1 line to the airport.

The CHAIR: But when the Western Sydney City Deal was done and all the mayors signed on, Blacktown council wasn't included, let alone Parramatta council. So why is the marker the distance from the airport to council areas that were not included within the region of the aerotropolis, or the pickup for jobs, rather than cities like Liverpool that were included?

ANGELA JEFFERY: I'd just like to make it very clear that, in answering the question that was put forward about why the connection into St Marys versus Leppington, it is a 15-minute journey time from the airport to the heavy rail, which is ideal, and then if you're looking at connectivity from the airport to other parts of Sydney, then that was answering that specific question. It wasn't a driver. It's not a key factor in the benefit analysis.

The CHAIR: All right. Working on that principle, what would have been the time from the airport to Leppington, if you had done it that way, rather than St Marys?

ANGELA JEFFERY: Apologies, I don't have that answer with me, but I could get that back—

The CHAIR: But it wouldn't be significantly different to 15 minutes, would it?

ANGELA JEFFERY: I'm really sorry, I don't have that. I'd like to take that on notice. I don't have that detail with me.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: I guess that's what we're trying to get to the bottom of. You listed a bunch of benefits, and that's fine. There is also a bunch of counter-benefits for building the Leppington line. And if we're weighing up costs and benefits, let's talk about the cost of tunnelling all that way versus going above ground to Leppington. We're just trying to get to the bottom of it. Maybe the easiest way to do that is to get our hands on the business case, or the summary of that business case, to work out who made the decision and based on what information.

ANGELA JEFFERY: Obviously, the decision to fund the project was made in 2019. What is really, really great is that there is funding allocated, \$100 million by both the State and Federal governments, to look at extension of the project from Bradfield to Macarthur in the future, and then also to Leppington, and work is underway on both of those southern extensions.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Since we're talking business cases, in the 2023-2024 budget there was a commitment to fund two business cases considering the future rail connection between St Marys and Tallawong via Schofields and Marsden Park and the future rail connection between Bradfield and Leppington-Glenfield and Bradfield and Campbelltown-Macarthur. What progress has been made on these business cases?

ANGELA JEFFERY: You're correct. In addition to the \$100 million that I've referenced, there has been a \$40 million budget allocation to look at the extension to Tallawong from St Marys. That's just been approved in the upcoming budget. Work has now started on that—very, very early considerations.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: That was in the 2023-2024 budget, not in the new budget.

ANGELA JEFFERY: The State funding has just come through, at \$40 million, for that business case.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: So it took almost a year for that to come through?

ANGELA JEFFERY: It's made available, and we are commencing on that business case.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Okay. This is in my electorate. What was the rationale for stopping the metro at Tallawong rather than connecting through to the T1 line? You've talked about the importance of connecting the metro to the T1 line. There is a 2.7-kilometre gap between Tallawong and Schofields. Why was that excluded from the original—

ANGELA JEFFERY: You're referring to the north-west metro?

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Yes.

ANGELA JEFFERY: Apologies, I'd have to take that question on notice.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Great.

The CHAIR: Could we move to a different area, transport movements. We've been trying to get our heads around the airport and whether it is going to be for freight movements and what kind of freight movements, or for passenger movements. Putting that aside, there's been a lot of talk about freight movements and warehousing in Western Sydney, in particular. Given that the difficulties on Elizabeth Drive and Mamre Road are longstanding, one of the big questions is that the M12 links the M7 and the Great Northern Road, but these industrial areas surrounding the airport—where most of the freight is moving—don't link to the M12. There are no on- and off-ramps. Given that the M7, as anyone who travels on it knows, is at capacity most of the time, why was that decision made?

PETA GAMON: Sorry, the decision made to not link Mamre Road to the M7?

The CHAIR: To not have an on and off and—yes, and on the M12. Obviously, if you're having your freight and your warehousing around the airport, you want your trucks to be able to get in—and that's the access road for the airport.

PETA GAMON: There is a future connection that has been planned for. We did a strategic business case that was finished, I think, first quarter of this year that actually had a link through from Mamre Road, the top part of Devonshire Road that would actually link up onto the M12 as part of that work.

The CHAIR: That's not being built as part of the original?

PETA GAMON: It's not part of the Mamre one or Mamre two projects; it's a separate project. It's part of the Devonshire link piece of infrastructure that connects to Mamre Road all the way down to—

The CHAIR: Onto the M12?

PETA GAMON: Yes, connected to the M12.

The CHAIR: Right. But it's not part of the current M12 construction?

PETA GAMON: No, it's a connection point that would—we've made space available. We've got space available there. Some of the property acquisitions that were done were done a little bit wider, ready to make way for a future connection from Mamre Road up onto the M12.

The CHAIR: I know it's not your fault—these are all political decisions—but wouldn't it have made sense to do as part of a job-lot construction?

PETA GAMON: Look, there is a lot of infrastructure that needs to be done out within the aerotropolis and a lot of different ways you could turn infrastructure on and bring the different staging and sequencing. A decision was made not to deliver it as part of the M12 piece of work. The decision on how it gets done will be looked at as part of the staging and sequencing work for the next tiers of investment that run through the aerotropolis.

The CHAIR: I've used this example before: The rail into Perth was \$1.3 billion. The Western Australian Government tells me if they had to go back and do it now, it would be \$3 billion, because with works that are left until later the cost rises exponentially because you don't get your economies of scale, costs go up—there is a whole range of things. Freight movement around that area is one of the most difficult things, with the M7 at capacity. Is this what we're going to see, a rollout of projects that will arc up as we're moving into higher usage at the airport and those industrial lands?

PETA GAMON: It's a really great question. Thank you. We're looking at a 30-year-plus program of infrastructure development that's needed to bring and activate the whole of the aerotropolis. We've been focused on the modelling and the staging and sequencing to have a look at how you would start to incrementally continue to build out that infrastructure to provide the best benefit to the capacity, the traffic and the flows. Our modelling tells us where the different pain points are on the network, and that helps influence the options that we provide up to government to say, "These are the next parts that you would need to construct, then these parts and these parts."

We do use the modelling and the assumptions that look at the different journeys being used—whether or not they're freight journeys, construction journeys, private vehicle or community journeys—and that has fed into the staging and sequencing of the work and the advice that went up to government recently. We obviously welcome the \$3 billion of investment from State and Federal governments to start building out the next part of the network. Yes, I think you'll see incremental growth across the aerotropolis, and we'll stage and sequence in line with maximising the benefits of that staging as we move through, in line with the availability of government funding to keep progressing that work.

The CHAIR: Essentially it's a timetable that's 30 years, with a rollout of investment over 30 years?

PETA GAMON: That's right.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: You mentioned one of my favourite little buzzwords: strategic business case. There's been some discussion today about all the planning that goes on in these major projects—strategic business cases, high level, big level, small level, designing, concept. There's been criticism that perhaps that process is a little overcooked and too much time and resources go into that. Is that something that you're looking at? Take, for instance, Fifteenth Avenue or the Leppington extension. There's pretty much agreement that it has to be done and the question is when it will be done. Is there a need to go into your nice, air-conditioned offices and spend all those years producing business cases when perhaps there's a way to do this in a more efficient, faster way and say, "Yes, here are the critical questions we need answered; let's get shovels in the ground"?

PETA GAMON: Thank you for that question. Probably what I'd expand on a little bit is that the business case is not just a business case—a piece of document. A lot of the work involves your environmental and planning, your development and your geotech work, so you're actually building through and doing your design along with those pieces of work. That does take time, particularly when you're looking at—we've got a lot of complex geographical issues out there in the aerotropolis. We've got flood resilience issues. So the work is not a document that you're doing; it's a lot of those investigation works that help you then be able to get ready to construct and hit the ground running when it comes to delivery.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: I guess the longer you spend on that, the longer it is until you get shovels in the ground. With construction costs going the way they are, some of the evidence and some of the questions have been around whether some of it can be done in parallel, done quicker or done in stages. Is that something you're looking at in order to get better bang for buck with taxpayers' money?

PETA GAMON: There are certainly ways that we do look at, if we need to, accelerating different things. One of the options is, for example, if there was enough confidence in where you wanted to build something, potentially you could get some exemptions to do some early acquisition to try to collapse and reduce some of the timelines, from concept and a twinkle in someone's eye of what needs to be done to down on the ground. But a lot of the time is because you've got to go through those processes. It is a lot of that investigation work, so there's not a huge amount of time that you could probably strip out of the work and the detail and the investigations that you need to do to get to the point of the—

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: You talked about an exemption process. How difficult would it be to get an exemption on, say, a major project going into the airport?

PETA GAMON: I'd probably have to take that one on notice to go through, but I know it's happened in the past. I'll take that one on notice.

ADRIAN DESSANTI: Just to add to that, I think it's also important to be aware of relevant assurance processes. Whenever you're doing major capital works or capital investment, and the business cases to support that, there's a level of assurance that needs to go through Infrastructure NSW and other regulatory bodies to make sure that the work we're doing has a bit of due diligence behind it. So, yes, there are always opportunities to try to carve up some of that work and maybe package up some of that work to get some bite-sized chunks out of it to take to future investment decisions.

But, ultimately, there is a time frame and a process we need to follow. It's not necessarily up to each individual department, whether it's Transport or Health or any other department, to circumvent that process. We obviously want to try to get to decisions quicker, but there is an assurance process that, as the Department of

Transport, we need to go through. Whenever we're spending taxpayers' money on those major projects through a business case process, there is a time frame that we have to follow and an assurance process that we have to follow.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Yes, I get that the underlying driver behind that is assurance and it is the public's money, but my concern is that we've overcorrected here and that we're over-assuring. We're over-egging and over-engineering the process in an attempt to be efficient and make sure we're spending taxpayers' money wisely. Perhaps we're actually wasting taxpayers' money by over-engineering that process. I guess you can't comment on that, but I just wanted to get your view on whether there are mechanisms or processes in place within the department to do lessons learned and look at best practice around the world. I'm not suggesting we build hospitals like they do in China, but we all saw that example where they whipped together a hospital in two to four weeks. It takes us 10 years, and surely there's somewhere in the middle where we can deliver important—

The CHAIR: We might have some different work health and safety standards.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: I'm sure the CFMEU wouldn't want us to throw something together in two or three weeks. Again, there's probably somewhere in the middle where we can look at efficiencies and get things out of the ground quicker.

PETA GAMON: One of the things that we were able to do in the aerotropolis—because there is so much work to be done out there—was we did a program business case. A lot of business cases that you'll see in the past look at A to B, a specific road, a pain point or part of a work, whereas the program business case that I referred to in that answer looked at seven priority corridors within the aerotropolis. So we could do it all at once. There are efficiencies with doing it altogether. We looked at how that network came together. We could use the modelling to test different options as we went through that, to look at how you could turn on and construct the infrastructure in a way that provided the best benefit. That has then formed part of the advice to government on the first projects that you would start to deliver, because we were able to have a look at that program view.

The CHAIR: Going back to Nathan's point, what you describe is a business plan. That's really a plan, not a business case. A business case is justifying and the return on investment and what growth you're going to get for every dollar you put in. This is maybe the confusion. What you're talking about is the plan. It's no different to an architect who goes out and designs something, brings the surveyors, does the geological tests and then puts it together. What we're trying to get at is the difference between an actual business—we're going to do it anyway. Seven corridors have been decided. We've decided to do it. You don't need to justify it; you just need to do the legwork to get it to fruition. That would be correct, wouldn't it?

PETA GAMON: I would say, as I said in the earlier answer, there are multiple elements to a strategic business case. We look at all of those elements when we go through. There are investigations. There is obviously an important cost element. There's a safety element. There's an environmental element and packaging them up, doing it together as a program and running that strategic business case.

The CHAIR: Why are we doing that on the seven routes that are coming in, but we didn't do that on the metro, or maybe you went to Macarthur and Narellan rather than to St Marys?

ANGELA JEFFERY: The business cases that have been funded now will do exactly what you've described.

The CHAIR: I know the ones now, but when Transport came in, put together their proposals and did a strategic overview, they looked at all seven routes and then made a decision based on the legwork they've done on all of them. Your original business case looked at St Marys to the airport and didn't consider whether Leppington was in that 15 minutes or going through that way. It only considered that leg.

ANGELA JEFFERY: It was obviously considered in a broader context. This is the first stage of a broader service.

The CHAIR: Sorry, but how was it considered in terms of a broader context? Was there a study that looked at the efficacy of going to Narellan, Leppington or Macarthur?

ANGELA JEFFERY: The extent to which the detail of those extensions was looked at in this original business case was to determine what should be in stage one. The benefit-cost ratio and that analysis was completed for an overall service. It was also completed for the first stage of the project.

The CHAIR: So you're saying there was a BCR for the overall—

ANGELA JEFFERY: Yes.

The CHAIR: You would be able to provide for us the BCR for the difference between doing stage one from Leppington to the airport as opposed to the BCR for from St Marys to the airport?

ANGELA JEFFERY: The business case contemplated a solution that was in line with the transport 2056 plan. A BCR was completed for the provisions that were part of that broader plan.

The CHAIR: That was the 2056 plan?

ANGELA JEFFERY: Yes, the 2056 transport plan.

The CHAIR: You're saying it was considered in the BCR. Did that consider a BCR from the airport to Leppington?

ANGELA JEFFERY: The 2056 plan, from recollection, may not have included that, but the scope of the project as it was described in the 2056 plan has completed a BCR overall for the North-South Rail Link.

The CHAIR: But that was the initial question. We go back to the initial question. Transport considered all seven routes in, and then made a priority on how you'd roll that out. You've got a BCR for the entire route, but was there a BCR that said what the BCR is for St Marys to the airport and a BCR that says this is what it is if we did stage one from the airport to Leppington?

ANGELA JEFFERY: The north-south rail link considers Tallawong down to Macarthur and the BCR has been completed for that overall north-south link. The BCR has been completed for the stage that's being built at the moment.

The CHAIR: So the reality is that there has never been a BCR for Leppington to the airport at the time the decision was made on stage one.

ANGELA JEFFERY: The business case was for a north-south rail link and there is a BCR completed—

The CHAIR: For the whole line, yes.

ANGELA JEFFERY: —for the north-south rail link.

The CHAIR: But there was no BCR for the link from the airport to Leppington at the time stage one was considered.

ANGELA JEFFERY: The business case that's being completed at the moment that has been funded—the \$100 million that we've already spoken about—will contemplate what the BCR is for the future.

The CHAIR: But that's not stage one, is it?

ANGELA JEFFERY: Stage one is St Marys to the aerotropolis.

The CHAIR: So there was no BCR at the time stage one was considered for the airport to Leppington?

ANGELA JEFFERY: I will have to take that on notice.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: Sorry, I probably came in three-quarters of the way through. I have two questions. We were talking about assurance processes. How many assurance processes have you done from transport to the new aerotropolis at this point in time?

PETA GAMON: How many strategic business cases have been—

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: How many assurance processes that you have gone through at the end, where you go through and check off that money—

PETA GAMON: Are you talking about the gates through the INSW process or are you talking about different projects or programs that run through a full assurance process?

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: The assurance process at the end of those projects. What are the projects relating to the aerotropolis that have been through that process and the assurance process at this point in time?

PETA GAMON: I can give you a run-down of the key projects in the aerotropolis that have had strategic business cases.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I know there are a lot. I want to know who has come through the assurance process or gone to that final thing that usually takes three to six months. I want to know what, relating to the aerotropolis, has actually gone through that assurance process, no matter what it is. You can take it on notice.

PETA GAMON: I am happy to take it on notice. There are quite a number of projects. And then we can let you know what stage some of them are at through the process.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: My last question is about compatibility. Why are we building metros with different systems, and will that stop?

ANGELA JEFFERY: To answer the first part of your question, the most reliable metros around the world are individual metro lines. We will be delivering a world-class metro to the people of Western Sydney and the people of Sydney. What makes a world-class metro designed to be so reliable is that, if you are in an infrequent instance where you have a downtime issue, it doesn't impact on the entire network. It can be isolated to that one line and it doesn't impact the balance of the service. Each individual metro line has got significant effort undertaken to ensure its reliability and its availability, and that is not different on the Western Sydney airport metro line. It also allows for aspects that are particular to a particular metro line to be considered. For example, where we're servicing an airport, the rolling stock—the train itself—will take into account customer requirements such as people with luggage, which might not be so relevant on other metros. That's definitely one of the benefits of this solution.

What I can also say is that we spend a lot of time looking at interchanges to make sure that the customer is at the centre of the way that we provide integrated transport solutions. We work really closely across the entire cluster to ensure that not only is an interchange easy for people who are moving from one metro to another but that people who want to have an interchange at a heavy train station such as St Marys to the metro, for example, will have active transport where that's relevant, ferries where that's relevant, bus routes where it will be relevant for Western Sydney. So as to ensure that we have a reliable and available service, we have continued with this solution. That is in line with world-class metros such as those delivered in Hong Kong, Singapore and Paris.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I have to say, in metros I've used around the world, you've not had to change multiple—yes, you've gone from heavy rail to metro but you've not made so many changes so I'll be curious to see. I'm not sure about the luggage issue. Are you saying that the Macarthur line now has luggage issues on it for people with luggage?

ANGELA JEFFERY: The metro luggage line?

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: Just the normal train—

The CHAIR: The airport line.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: There is no metro there—just the normal line. Is that an issue with luggage? Are these trains going to be wider than those trains or—

ANGELA JEFFERY: Sorry, which train are you comparing?

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I'm comparing the train into the airport we've got at the moment—into Kingsford Smith.

ANGELA JEFFERY: That's a train. That's a heavy rail vehicle, which is different to a metro train.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: So are these going to be the same width or thinner or—what's the difference?

ANGELA JEFFERY: The dimensions are altogether different. They're not a—I'm not sure if you've had an opportunity to use the North West metro but they're very different.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: We don't have a metro; I'll have to try it.

The CHAIR: A long way from Wollondilly, I suspect.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: Yes, a long way from anything there.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Just to complete the confusion over the multiple different voltages and things throughout the—so in your opinion, having three different types of metro is better for customers than having a single loop through Sydney?

ANGELA JEFFERY: For the example that I've spoken about—and it's not a unique situation to Sydney; we are following suit with the most reliable metros in other parts of the world—if you have an issue in one part of your service it doesn't impact the entire network.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Could you not just do that by having separate connections—a shorter connection. Is it necessary to have different voltages and entirely different trains across the loop?

ANGELA JEFFERY: You potentially could, but the benefit of the way that metro is being delivered is that it allows for contestability. So you ensure not only reliable and available service to the people of Sydney with the way that is being delivered today but you provide for opportunities to tender. If we were to continue to expand a single offering, you would be negotiating with one service provider versus—

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Could you not just have a standard? Could you not just implement a standard from a transport point of view? For example, we have a standard gauge on heavy rail which was done, I believe, in the 1800s. We have widths for roads. We have standard valves on tyres across multiple different manufacturers.

ANGELA JEFFERY: We do have a standard gauge. The contestability part means that we have a value-for-money offering to the taxpayers.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: But the gauge is not the same as the voltage. There are three different voltages that run from north-west to south-west and we've already seen the dysfunction that is caused with the light rail from eastern Sydney to Western Sydney—the inner west lines. All of the advantages that you're talking about are actually catastrophic failures when there is a problem with one side to the other.

ANGELA JEFFERY: I see what you're asking; you're asking about how do we prevent catastrophic failures. Our project—

Mr WARREN KIRBY: And convenience for customers. You said yourself that customer convenience is a priority. I just don't see how it's convenient to jump on a metro at Tallawong, jump off it at St Marys onto a different one and jump off it again when you get to the southern side. You're forcing customers to do multiple interchanges, whereas they can jump on a train in the Blue Mountains and jump off at Central and everything's good.

ANGELA JEFFERY: Sorry, I thought you initially said you were comfortable with the idea that they're separate lines and that the interchange is—

Mr WARREN KIRBY: No, I'm not comfortable with it at all. I think it's absurd that you would have multiple different voltages and multiple different trains on a single line.

ANGELA JEFFERY: That's different to, necessarily, interchanges. The interchanges definitely are designed for customer centricity.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: But you have to interchange in order to get onto the different train. I can't sit on a train from Tallawong and get all the way through to Campbelltown.

ANGELA JEFFERY: The interchange will be designed as a part of the future extension. So where that interchange occurs will be designed so—at the moment we have an interchange at Chatswood and we have a 98 per cent customer satisfaction on a month-to-month basis score result as a part of the North West metro. It's 98 per cent customer satisfaction because it's such a simple interchange at our Chatswood station. The contestability and the ability to tender future extensions and future works really is a value-for-money benefit for the taxpayer.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: But not for the customer. You're talking to somebody who does catch that metro. I must be part of the 2 per cent. Because it actually took me an hour and a half to get in from Kellyville this morning to this building because of the interchange at Chatswood. I would argue that if it's so good why are we building an extension from Chatswood through to the city—if it's so convenient?

ANGELA JEFFERY: Sorry, I'm not sure what the question is.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: You're saying that you're focusing on the customer first, but in your response you're saying that one of your major justifications for it is so you can go out to tender and save the taxpayer money at some stage in the future. But I still don't understand why the tender can't say, "Trains must be X voltage. They must have X gauge on the wheels." If the gauge is the same all the way through, why can't the voltage be the same?

ANGELA JEFFERY: That would still have an interchange. If the voltage was the same, the interchange would still be the same. The interchange provides for a very high percentage of reliability—98 per cent frequently. For the customer, they are getting a reliable and an available service. The interchange is designed with them in mind. With regard to the cost to deliver the project—

Mr WARREN KIRBY: So you would still have to change trains at St Marys even if the voltage was the same all the way through? If I jumped on at Tallawong and I wanted to go to the aerotropolis, if it was a standard that whole length, I would still have to change trains. Is that what you're saying?

ANGELA JEFFERY: There are different operators on those two lines so, potentially, yes.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: But I think that's the point we're getting to. You've given the example of Paris and whatever, but if you look at the map and Future Transport 2056, it looks like the plan is to create a complete circle of a metro around the Sydney Basin. When I go to places like Tokyo or whatever that have pretty extensive metro systems, when you catch the Shinjuku line or whatever you catch, it does a loop and it's the one

train and they're all the same. But what we're working towards in Sydney is we're going to have this loop but you're going to have to get off three or four times because you get on the south-west metro and you stop and you get on a different train and then you get to Tallawong and you change and then you get to St Marys and you change. The point that's coming across here is, in creating that loop, why didn't we have a standard gauge, standard voltage, standard carriage?

ANGELA JEFFERY: I'm happy to take the question on notice. So when you've got an interchange in that loop, even in Tokyo or Singapore or any other city that has got the highest reliability metro—we are delivering a service in line with that and the people of Sydney and the people of Western Sydney in particular will end up with a service in line with other world-class metros, because they are delivering those high reliability percentages month on month.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: The M12 exit into Mamre Road—will that be completed within the first 12 months of the airport coming online?

PETA GAMON: No, we have no funding to progress that at the moment. It was part of the strategic business case work that looked at the seven prioritised roads. It has not got funding to progress through to the next stage at this point.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: How many outbound aircraft are we expecting after the first year of operation of the airport?

PETA GAMON: That's probably a question for the airport, I'm afraid.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: The reason I ask is because we're trucking fuel, and a 737 takes about 25,000 litres. A truck carries around about 40,000 litres fully laden, which means there are multiple truck movements that have to go in and out. Wouldn't it be important to understand how many planes have to be serviced, therefore how many trucks need to be moved, therefore the road network and the viability of trucking that in versus piping it in?

PETA GAMON: Thank you for that question. In the modelling that we do that has fed into the prioritisation and the optioneering of the infrastructure that we're delivering, we do have assumptions baked into that based on the traffic in and out of the airport, including the fuel traffic that would come through, the piping of the fuel traffic. That is factored into the prioritisation of the infrastructure we'll need to support.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: What's the assumption of the amount of fuel trucks that need to be moved?

PETA GAMON: I'd have to take that on notice and come back to you on that.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Are there plans to develop an alternative to having a lot of jet fuel moving by trucks around Sydney?

PETA GAMON: Again, it's probably a question for the airport. I understand that they are looking at different options and, like you, I'm sure, the fuel pipeline and other things have been discussed. Our role is to support the airport with the decisions they make as far as how they're going to service and support the airport.

The CHAIR: Just on the fuel trucks coming in, it was raised earlier that, obviously, if you're bringing fuel trucks in, you need hazardous waiting areas. You need lay-by areas, some place for separation with the road network around—and truck rest stops as well because you're going to, obviously, have to wait to get in and wait to get out. Has that been factored in?

PETA GAMON: Again, I probably have to take on notice exactly where the airport are at with their work in that space, but we're working with them as they move through the process and making sure that we're considering, depending on which routes they take, depending on which service they go through and once they've tendered that work. As we get more information on the pathways, we'll work with them to make sure that we've got the right infrastructure in place to support the airport operations.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: To take that a little bit further, we've heard evidence about the need for—there's been a lot of focus on the needs of getting customers and workers in and out. A lot of that is by bus and by truck. Has there been any provision throughout the road network for amenities, places for truck drivers to stop, to make sure they're complying with their logbooks, all of those sorts of things? With bus drivers as well—whether there are amenities blocks, meal rooms, that sort of thing? Has that been part of the design?

PETA GAMON: There are probably a few elements to that. I might ask Adrian to talk about the amenities for the bus aspect.

ADRIAN DESSANTI: In terms of our bus services to the airport, we're working through things like driver amenities at places like the—both at Bradfield in terms of future interchange, and also at the airport. So

we're working through the requirements that we need to provide for those amenities. We will be going through further work and detail with the bus operators over the next six to 12 months to firm that up. But, absolutely, in terms of end-of-trip facilities for our public bus services—can't talk specifically to things like coach services and those things because they're sort of commercially operated.

But, certainly, with regard to our contracted bus operators and our services that we're providing to the airport, those end-of-trip facilities are absolutely paramount, absolutely front of mind for us. It would be prudent for us to make sure they're on the ground, available to those operators and those bus drivers. We're talking about distances of 25, 35 kilometres in length on average and the need for those drivers to get to those amenities pretty quickly when they get to the end of their trip is paramount. That's absolutely something we're working through with the airport at the moment, but also with configuration around Bradfield and future interchange there, as well.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: With the operators but also with the unions?

ADRIAN DESSANTI: Yes, I understand we will be discussing that more broadly with the unions and those other key stakeholders that support the provision of the bus services as well. We are very aware that that was a particular area of interest in the recent bus taskforce work that I was part of, as well. I think that collaboration and that greater understanding—but greater discussion with those key stakeholders like unions and the operators in terms of things like driver facilities—was one thing that really became quite prominent in that discussion and that work with the taskforce. That's absolutely something we're looking at right at the moment.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: So it will be suggested that was not part of the business case?

ADRIAN DESSANTI: In terms of providing those facilities?

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Yes, providing the facilities. You're talking about you will be in communication with the operators and the unions in the future. Can I take from that, that that hasn't been considered as part of the business cases in the road network around it?

ADRIAN DESSANTI: I can take that specific one on notice with regards to whether it has or hasn't been. The understanding is the work we're doing to finalise the operationalisation of those bus routes is that there will be facilities available to bus drivers at the end of trip.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: You were talking about the routes and the transporting fuel. We don't know what route they're taking at this point—is what you're saying?

PETA GAMON: That's correct. I believe they're still going through the process.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: How can Transport plan for it when you don't know what route? How can we even guess?

PETA GAMON: At the moment, as I said, we've made certain assumptions on the different routes and different variables of how you would bring the fuel in, depending on where the fuel comes in from, and which harbour it comes in from depends on which direction you move through. We've made assumptions for each of those and they've been factored into the prioritisation.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: How many options would there be?

PETA GAMON: I'd have to take that on notice.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: If you find your options, maybe the Committee might be able to find out what those options are.

PETA GAMON: I think the airport will be best placed to talk about the different options. We're not part of that procurement process.

The CHAIR: They've got to come through a port, though, essentially, is what you're saying. It narrows it down a bit.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: There's a lot of talk about the Clyde fuel terminal. I thought it was all coming from Clyde, but this is new information that it's not.

The CHAIR: Clyde fuel? What Clyde fuel terminal?

PETA GAMON: Sorry, that is a question for the airport on where they're bringing the fuel in from. I'm not privy to that information.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: We're in 2024 now and we're going to fly in 2026.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Infrastructure Australia has a preferred option, which is west from Clyde and then down.

The CHAIR: The time for questions has run out. I'd like to thank you for appearing before the Committee today. You will be provided with a copy of the transcript of today's proceedings for corrections. The Committee staff will also email any questions taken on notice from today and any supplementary questions from the Committee. We kindly ask that you return these answers within 14 days.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

Mr NICK RYAN, Executive Manager, Policy and Advocacy, Business Western Sydney, sworn and examined

The CHAIR: I welcome our next witness. Thank you for appearing before the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure today to give evidence. Can you please confirm that you have been issued with the inquiry terms of reference and information about the standing orders that relate to the examination of witnesses?

NICK RYAN: I have.

The CHAIR: Do you have any questions about this information?

NICK RYAN: No.

The CHAIR: Would you like to make a short opening statement before we begin the questions?

NICK RYAN: Yes, please. I'd like to start by thanking the Chair, the Deputy Chair and the rest of Committee for having me along today. I was born in Campbelltown, I grew up in Camden and now I live on the border of Penrith and the Blue Mountains. I am a product of the Western Parkland City, so it's a great pleasure and privilege to get to speak to the Committee today on behalf of Business Western Sydney. Business Western Sydney welcomes the recent Federal and State government road funding boost. We also warmly welcome the important changes to the Western Parkland City Authority to give it a more targeted remit. We look forward to the leadership of Infrastructure NSW and the role it will play going forward.

We also congratulate the Government on the tripartite forums with councils and State and Federal government officials to sort through these important issues. Greater Western Sydney, outer Western Sydney, the Western Parkland City—whatever you like to call it—in my view has experienced two centuries of underinvestment. Often it has given more to the city than it has received back, and that has to change. The opportunities that the airport and the surrounding employment lands offer, amongst many, are logistics, manufacturing and even agriculture.

This means that the least well connected corner of Sydney now needs to become the best connected corner of Sydney—not just a little bit connected but very well connected, by roads and rail, so that the things that this region produces and needs to receive can be connected to every corner of the State, every corner of the country and, via the airport and ports, to every corner of the world. We believe that good plans have been put forward over the last couple of years for this region, but it's often said that plans without a deadline are just dreams. This region wants more than just dreams; it wants commitments. We look forward to being part of the process of making sure that this region gets those guarantees.

The CHAIR: Before we go to questions, I wish to inform you that you may wish to take a question on notice and provide the Committee with an answer in writing within 14 days after receiving the questions. That's an option for you, if you want to take a question on notice. Can I start with the jobs projections for Western Sydney. You're talking about logistics, manufacturing and agriculture. What are the projections that Business Western Sydney sees in terms of movements of freight from the airport and the jobs that will create?

NICK RYAN: I would love to give you accurate projections of that, but I don't believe that anyone truly has those at this point and is in a position to give those. They really are aspirations. I know that the number that has been delivered to this inquiry a few times has been a commitment for 200,000 jobs. There has been no specificity about exactly what those jobs are and exactly what sectors they are. Of course, after the Government announced that the airport would go ahead, there was enormous excitement by multinational companies and domestic ones to want to operate and set up. For the most part, those have been defence, manufacturing, logistics and some opportunity for some agriculture. It's really difficult to project exactly what numbers those are going to be. Again, these are aspirations, and we're hoping that we can fulfil them. At the moment, as I say, we have dreams; they're not actually commitments.

The CHAIR: I'm not sure which defence industries you're talking about. Are you talking about defence industries around the Liverpool region?

NICK RYAN: Currently, at Bankstown Airport, parts of the wingtip of the F-35 joint strike fighter are manufactured. So there's some very advanced, globally significant manufacturing taking place in Western Sydney at the moment. There are opportunities for all of the major prime defence manufacturers, like Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, Thales and various others. They've publicly stated that they're interested in setting up operations around the airport. Just north of the airport is the Orchard Hills army base. They already assemble munitions and complex defence systems there. There already is the talent and the capability. International defence companies see an opportunity to expand there.

The CHAIR: The army base at Orchard Hills-Penrith has been there for decades, or nearly a century. It has been there a long time. They don't necessarily ship out by freight, do they?

NICK RYAN: No. I'm sure we'll come to freight as well. For example, the Orchard Hills army base has recently signed a contract with Lockheed Martin for new weapons systems and missiles that will be assembled at Orchard Hills. It's not difficult to imagine that a company like Lockheed Martin—that's already doing that stuff there—would like to increase its presence in Western Sydney. With the freight lines and connections that are possible, I personally believe that it's very likely that we'll probably have the Orca submarines in Port Kembla. We already have the F-35 joint strike fighters. Every single fighter plane that we have in Australia, at some point, visits Newcastle for refurbishment. Western Sydney represents an incredible opportunity to do the manufacturing, fulfilment and logistics to support the navy in the Illawarra and the air force in the Hunter. It's a pretty good place to go and do more of what's already happening.

The CHAIR: Was Business Western Sydney concerned that—for example, we've had evidence that the M12 was built without any exits onto Mamre Road and where a lot of the logistics warehousing and large vehicle movements are.

NICK RYAN: My evidence as far as roads are concerned will be no different from what you've already heard before and, in fact, is entirely in line with what you've heard from the Western Parkland City mayors and general managers. We need roads. We need better investment in roads. I could spend the entirety of my time here listing the roads that need upgrades or attention or funding. There's an enormous number.

The CHAIR: But we've got a road that is being built, the M12. That's meant to be the major road into the airport, and it hasn't been constructed with the exits on and off to the major movements of freight in the area. Is that concerning? What questions did you ask at the time about why—was a justification given at the time about why this wasn't happening?

NICK RYAN: Did we ask questions of that planning?

The CHAIR: Your organisation is quite often at these announcements. I'm assuming you were briefed. Did you ask the questions?

NICK RYAN: In large part, we came about as a result of the Western Sydney Airport, as we advocated for it very strongly from the beginning and so have grown up alongside the existence and the promise of the airport. It is concerning that the promises made by various former governments about the roads that will enable the jobs and the investment have not been forthcoming and they've not been commensurate with what was promised. There are problems with the connectivity of the M12 with the surrounding roads. But that is true of virtually all of the roads that exist through here, is that there hasn't been a kind of systemic and—one of the ways to describe the problem with the road situation is that there are multiple plans and lines on maps for all of these roads. What there hasn't been from government, either State or Federal, is a plan that literally has a timeline about "Here is the road." We don't much care exactly what order they're built in; we just want to see them built. You could start from north to the south. But we would really love to see actual commitments that Mamre Road will be built by X date and with this money, followed by, followed by, followed by. There hasn't been that systematic and planned approach to any of these roads. That is why, in part, we're in the situation that we're in.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Yesterday's announcement about Infrastructure NSW taking a more central role—having the power to pull other agencies into line and having a very defined role there, and what was the Western Parkland City Authority now having a very distinct, focused role on development—what's Business Western Sydney's view of that announcement?

NICK RYAN: We think that's great. I think it's slowly been revealed over the last couple of years that the systems and the structures that were put in place to deliver this stuff just weren't working. You can argue that the Western Parkland City Authority was possibly responsible for too much and so was serving too many masters. That, we think, was problematic. The much more narrow focus of the Bradfield Development Authority, we think, is great and warmly welcome that and actually have called for that in more recent submissions—that the actual structure of the governance around these things just hasn't been quite right. So I think bringing in Infrastructure NSW is a great idea.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Back to roads, there's a little road that runs from my electorate. It's called Fifteenth Avenue. In your submission, you've considered expediting the development of a business case for Fifteenth Avenue as a priority. Can you speak to that and why you consider that such an important link into the airport and what it might do for the region?

NICK RYAN: Thanks for the question. We do think that Fifteenth Avenue is important to the region: to Liverpool, to Bradfield and the surrounding communities. It's kind of been the poor cousin of the discussion

around roads. Even in the recent announcement, various business cases, it just keeps getting missed. There are multiple roads that are very important to the east-west movements, particularly between Liverpool and Bankstown and Fairfield to the airport. We talk a lot about them, and have already, in terms of the M12, of course Elizabeth Drive—and there's other roads like Bringelly and Camden Valley Way, which are important as well. We think that it's important that each of those roads are given quite a specific purpose. It would be a really poor outcome if each one of those east-west roads was imagined to just achieve exactly the same thing. Some of them are transit roads like the M12; you just want to get through. Some, like Elizabeth Drive, are a major arterial road.

We think that, ultimately, we would like to see a very high-quality outcome for Fifteenth Avenue. There is a really great opportunity—in my view and in Business Western Sydney's view—that we would love to see a light rail service between Liverpool and Bradfield via Fifteenth Avenue, with centre-running trams. That can definitely begin with buses and one day become trams, but it could be the Anzac Parade of south-west Sydney. The opportunity to even pay for that with development contributions from allowing mid-rise development of six- to 10-storey buildings along the way would provide an opportunity for not just housing, but economic uplift as well. You could have small businesses on the bottom level—nightclubs, jazz bars, hairdressers or whatever you like—and then housing above. If you live in Austral, our calculations are that if you had a light rail it could get you either west to the airport in 15 minutes, even stopping a few times along the way, or 15 minutes into Liverpool—again, living in the middle of it—and then you're also quite close to places like Leppington.

We think there's room for some vision and some good quality outcomes there. I know, Deputy Chair, that you're on the record, quite rightly, describing the very haphazard development patterns that are taking place around Fifteenth Avenue. It would be a horrible outcome if all it becomes is a glorified bus lane with very low density housing around it and not a lot else to do. The problem with this area as well is that the Western Parkland City is larger than Singapore. It is an enormous area. You could fit, easily and quite comfortably, Singapore into that area. The distance between Liverpool to Bradfield is 17 kilometres; that's almost the distance between Sydney and Parramatta. We're obsessed with developing Sydney. We've become obsessed with developing Parramatta. But of course we care about places like Rozelle, the bays and other places—

The CHAIR: We don't.

NICK RYAN: Well, you mightn't. But, equivalently, Austral and Leppington need to be loved too, between those places.

The CHAIR: Sorry, I shouldn't have said that.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: In your opinion, why should urgent attention be given to the pipeline from Clyde fuel terminal to the airport?

NICK RYAN: There were many questions before, and we do think that is a priority and should be expedited. I know that in evidence given to this inquiry so far, some have suggested that, ultimately, some agencies and planners may wait 20 or 30 years for it to be commercially viable to then build the pipeline. We think that's outrageous. If the people of Western Sydney are going to have to put up with a 24-hour non-curfew airport, they shouldn't also have to put up with something that no other part of Sydney has to put up with, which is the dangers that come about from highly-flammable, dangerous aviation fuel driving around, likely, the M5, the M7 and the M12. That's the most direct route to get fuel from Botany to the airport. That's the roads that will likely be used.

There are enough accidents on those motorways as it is—I know, because I've grown up on them—without putting unnecessary amounts of flammable chemicals there. The EPA will be responsible, as they are with any kind of dangerous vehicle movements, to have to operate there. This project breaks traditional funding models, I think, in many ways. It's so enormous, it's so big and it's so greenfield—it's the lime-green of greenfields—that I'm not sure the methods and the models we use to fund things like this entirely work for this corner of Sydney at the moment. Usually funding for extensions to existing infrastructure—imagine that you're extending an industrial estate that already exists and you're moving it a little further out. We're talking about a place that has barely any traditional existing utilities. We have to build it from scratch.

This is incredibly expensive and it's incredibly visionary. It requires funding and budgets that are commensurate with that. We would absolutely love to say, and as the Deputy Chair has said as well, the pipeline has been on the radar of Infrastructure Australia for a decade. It was identified: The moment we said there was an airport that needs to be there, someone clever immediately said, "Oh, we're going to need to put a pipeline there." This has been on the books for a really long time. It will almost certainly run from Clyde to the airport. We have to figure out where that's going to go. A lot of that is greenfields right now.

The CHAIR: How is Clyde to the airfield greenfield?

NICK RYAN: I'm saying that the airport and the surrounds are not highly urbanised, dense places. Yes, there are existing houses and things there.

The CHAIR: But I'm saying Clyde's not.

NICK RYAN: It certainly isn't, but I'm saying that for probably two-thirds of the length of the pipeline from Clyde. So the initial bit, getting it out of Clyde and getting it into the LGA of Penrith and toward the airport, that's the tricky bit because it's already very dense and urbanised and you're going to have to run it under the M4 and all sorts of tricky things. But then the rest of the way, if we did it now, would be a lot easier. If we wait 30 years, it is going to be a lot more expensive and a lot more difficult, and then residents and occupiers of those properties will probably kick up a stink. Get it done now.

The CHAIR: But you compare the cost—just taking it out that far along the M4, that's not undeveloped. It's not like there's a corridor you can take a pipeline down along the M4 to get out to Penrith. That would be astronomical in cost, wouldn't it?

NICK RYAN: Yes, it's going to be expensive. All of this is going to be expensive.

The CHAIR: But at the moment we're arguing that we only have stage one of the rail that was promised as the original airport that's not been delivered for the Leppington and Campbelltown legs. If that's not even on the drawing board now, you're talking another 10 years probably before that's delivered, aren't you?

NICK RYAN: Indeed. I think, as evidence tendered—I believe it was Ben Taylor from Wollondilly who said that over the last 15 to 20 years there has been five times as much investment in the City of Sydney and three times as much investment in Parramatta than there has been in the entirety of the Western Parkland City.

The CHAIR: Sorry, say that line again.

NICK RYAN: There has been five times more investment in the city that we're sitting in right now and three times as much investment in the City of Parramatta than there has been in the entirety of the Western Parkland City.

The CHAIR: Wouldn't that be because Business Western Sydney argued that there should be light rail stage one and stage two and a Metro West?

NICK RYAN: I'm not sure that we can take full responsibility for all the decisions made. For funding in Parramatta, we'd love to—

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Borger definitely takes credit for it.

The CHAIR: I can tell you who says he takes credit for it.

NICK RYAN: We welcome the investment in Parramatta. It has been a long time coming. I'm not sure Business Western Sydney can be blamed for the lack of commensurate funding for the rest of Western Sydney.

The CHAIR: No, but what I'm saying is it's not unlimited funding, is it? We have this stretch between Campbelltown and Narellan and the airport with absolutely no transport infrastructure. We have Fifteenth Avenue that has been promised for a long time. We have the M12, with the links coming on. We don't even know how many planes are going to come in and out of this airport. Really, would the pipeline be at the top of your priority list?

NICK RYAN: Yes. Again, I just think for the safe functioning of the airport and the community, we would love to see plans right now. Let's identify a corridor. That's going to take time. There's an indicative one; there isn't an exact one. That will cost a few million dollars. We should at least do that to know exactly where it's going to go and exactly what's required. We don't know the answer to that because it hasn't been prioritised, so let's figure that out. Let's figure out just how quickly we can bring it on so that, instead of waiting 20 to 30 years, we may only have to wait 10 to have trucks running between Botany and the airport—as opposed to an entire generation to wait for a pipeline. At the moment that is not being prioritised, and we just think that that should be. We kind of need everything everywhere all at once.

The problem is that this region is starting from behind and we're expecting it to get in front. There isn't an unlimited pot of money, but I would say to the Federal Government, who has been prioritising GST allocations to every other State but New South Wales, "It's time to come back to the first State of Australia and start spending some money in Western Sydney," which, ultimately, helps make it the Government. It should actually start rewarding the loyal Labor voters of Western Sydney with commensurate GST funding to support one of the fastest growing places in the country. I think underfunding, particularly from the Federal Government for probably a generation, is a problem. There isn't an unlimited pot of money, but we're prioritising giving money to Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. It's probably time we spent some in Western Sydney.

The CHAIR: I think Western Australia is the bigger problem. This is an argument that everyone has made, from Michael Egan forward. It is not a new argument.

NICK RYAN: Horizontal fiscal equalisation—it's something that needs to happen for Western Sydney immediately.

The CHAIR: This announcement has been long—there was a better cities deal that was done in 2018. We are now six years down the track from that, and we still do not have any commitment on anything other than a St Marys link to the airport and the M12, and now \$3 billion that has just been announced between the State and Federal governments for the Mamre Road and Elizabeth Drive overpasses.

NICK RYAN: To be fair to the former Government, even just momentarily, there was a massive backlog of infrastructure that just was not built under the Carr Government. He deliberately sold off corridor space to make it quite difficult to build road infrastructure so, ultimately, we had to spend \$17 billion to connect the M4 to the city under the ground, and then brought in on time—

The CHAIR: You spent \$17 billion?

NICK RYAN: We did, as a State, to go and make that happen by leasing our poles and wires and then built the first driverless metro in the Southern Hemisphere, from the Hills to Chatswood. There was some good stuff that started, but clearly the puff went out of the last Government, and it was off to a good start.

The CHAIR: So this is your argument: The last Labor Government built nothing, because you're ignoring the M5 East extension, the Cross City Tunnel, the Anzac Bridge and that kind of infrastructure, and your only infrastructure—

NICK RYAN: I'm saying, particularly for outer Western Sydney, there was a lack of investment.

The CHAIR: The M7.

NICK RYAN: Which was funded by the Federal Government because the then Carr Government refused to build it.

The CHAIR: You wanted Federal governments to put money in.

NICK RYAN: I do. We did have that. We need more of it, and it has been lacking.

The CHAIR: The M5 interchange.

NICK RYAN: Indeed. It's been lacking. We need more of it and we deserve it. New South Wales has 40 per cent of the industrial capacity of Australia. This is one of the most productive places in Australia. In terms of return on investment, a dollar spent in Western Sydney on infrastructure will return a significantly greater outcome than anywhere else.

The CHAIR: Then why do you think that the last Government, instead of building these links where you could have done the extensions across from the airport all the way—instead of just naming stage one in 2018 that went from St Marys to the airport. They did no business case on whether it was better to do it from the airport to Leppington. Why were they building roads into the inner city from Rozelle—from your favourite area—rather than doing these priorities in Western Sydney?

NICK RYAN: I can't say that Rozelle is my favourite place in Sydney, never having lived there and not spending a lot of time there.

The CHAIR: Sorry, I must have been thinking of Chris Brown.

NICK RYAN: Indeed, who's a fan of that part of eastern Sydney. I believe there was a process that was gone through. I'm not an apologist for every government's former decisions. There was a process that was gone through. We've got the backbone of the north-south metro line. That's a great start. It's a real shame that it hasn't continued from St Marys to Tallawong and from Bradfield to Macarthur. It should, and there are business cases in train. Let's see them happen and let's get it funded.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I have two questions. You're talking about the electrification and duplication of the rail line from Macarthur to Picton improving connectivity to the Western Sydney Aerotropolis and the airport. I'm puzzled why the thought is to go to Picton versus the Wilton-Appin area where there are many people being shifted in. Do you have any thoughts on that?

NICK RYAN: I think it's outrageous that there is electrification of railway lines from Central all the way north, through Sydney, through Hornsby, all the way to the Central Coast and Newcastle, and that you can go west electrified from Central all the way to Lithgow and beyond. It's outrageous that the electrification of the

railway line stops at Macarthur in the south. Again, I would claim that south-west Sydney—that is a barefaced example of everyone else gets a prize except for them. I think it's outrageous that Wollondilly is increasingly being expected and treated as an extension of suburban Sydney without also then having a promise to extend the suburban railway line to support that urban sprawl and suburban development there.

I won't be overly picky. If, ultimately, the Government came out and said, "We're going to electrify from Macarthur to Wilton"—great. We think that Wilton and some of those other developments could be provision for when and if we ever get a Maldon-Dombarton line; it could be on that line. But Picton seems to be a good spot that—what happens at Campbelltown at the moment where country trains can stop and people can interchange and then get on the suburban line, we think that there is some logic in that now happening at Picton.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: This is my last question. The Outer Sydney Orbital is being slated as a motorway and a freight rail line, connecting Box Hill in the north and the Hume Motorway near Menangle in the south. What happens with the freight at the end, at Menangle?

NICK RYAN: I think what's important in this conversation is to appreciate that there are two different types of freight: there is heavy freight and there is light freight. Heavy freight and rail freight is really great for things like aggregate and concrete and steel. It's not obvious to me that there is going to be a lot of heavy manufacturing taking place in Mamre Road and the Western Sydney employment lands. There could be. If we were manufacturing cars, then having as much rail freight as humanly possible to get that out would be important. I think what is more likely is cochlear implants and RØDE microphones and microchips and advanced defence parts and munitions potentially being manufactured there. They'll either be so bespoke and small that a truck makes way more sense or they'll be light and—like medical devices that could be manufactured specifically for patients in Western Sydney and then shipped anywhere in the world—are likely to want to use air freight, not rail freight.

We think the outer orbital is important. I, personally, think that it's important. I think the current proposed alignment needs work. I think it was rushed. I think where it starts and where it stops is good. I think some of the bits in between require some extra work. I think building a tunnel in a flood plain is an interesting idea that was proposed by the last Government, that I'm not sure is going to be as easy or as cheap as people might suggest. But is it required? Let's provision for a freight line there, too. I actually think what really needs to be prioritised is that we have half a western freight line identified at the moment, so we know where the freight line goes from Mamre Road to about Fairfield, but we need to get it from where we have an identified corridor to Leeton to where it could then get on the southern freight line to go past the intermodal at Liverpool and then down to the South Coast.

That's how you can get freight on rail in and out of the airport using the outer orbital. Maybe that's required one day, but in conversations I've had with some people who have worked at ARTC they've said that it may never be required, it might be required, and the western freight line might be sufficient to get things in and out of that space without having then a second freight line. But, yes, if that answers your question?

The CHAIR: Unfortunately, we have run out of time. Thank you very much for appearing before the Committee today. You will be provided with a copy of the transcript of today's proceedings for corrections. The Committee staff will also email any questions taken on notice from today and any supplementary questions from the Committee. We kindly ask that you return answers within 14 days.

(The witness withdrew.)

The Committee adjourned at 16:35.