



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 6

## Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion

Report 11

April 2020

6



Portfolio Committee No. 6 - Transport and Customer Service

# **Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion**

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## Terms of reference

1. That Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and Customer Service inquire into and report on aspects of the planned conversion of the Sydenham-Bankstown Line from heavy rail to metro, being the southwest part of the Sydney Metro City and Southwest project, including:
  - (a) the adequacy of the business case and viability of Metro,
  - (b) the consideration of alternatives for improving capacity and reducing congestion,
  - (c) the factors taken into account when comparing the alternatives and the robustness of the evidence used in decision-making,
  - (d) whether metro is a suitable means of transport over long distances,
  - (e) the consultation process undertaken with, and the adequacy of information given to, community, experts and other stakeholders,
  - (f) the impact on the environment and heritage conservation,
  - (g) any lobbying, political donations or other influence of the public or private sector in relation to making that decision,
  - (h) the tender process for appointing private operators,
  - (i) the contractual arrangements entered into in respect of the project,
  - (j) the adequacy of temporary transport arrangements during the conversion process, including for people with a disability,
  - (k) the impact on the stations west of Bankstown, and
  - (l) any related matter.
2. That the committee report by Tuesday, 30 June 2020.<sup>1</sup>

The terms of reference were self-referred by the committee on 22 August 2019.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The original reporting date was Tuesday, 31 March 2020 (*Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 22 August 2019, pp 378-379). The reporting date was later extended to Tuesday, 30 June 2020 (*Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 24 March 2020, p 865).

<sup>2</sup> *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 22 August 2019, pp 378-379

## Committee details

### Committee members

<b>Ms Abigail Boyd MLC</b>	The Greens	<i>Chair</i>
<b>Hon Mark Banasiak MLC</b>	Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
<b>Hon Anthony D'Adam MLC*</b>	Australian Labor Party	
<b>Hon Wes Fang MLC **</b>	The Nationals	
<b>Hon Scott Farlow MLC***</b>	Liberal Party	
<b>Hon Shayne Mallard MLC</b>	Liberal Party	
<b>Hon Daniel Mookhey MLC</b>	Australian Labor Party	

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\*The Hon Anthony D'Adam MLC substituted for the Hon Peter Primrose MLC from 22 August 2019 to 10 November 2019, and the Hon John Graham MLC from 11 November 2019 for the duration of the inquiry.

\*\*The Hon Wes Fang MLC substituted for the Hon Sam Farraway MLC from 19 November 2019 for the duration of the inquiry.

\*\*\*The Hon Scott Farlow MLC replaced the Hon Catherine Cusack MLC as a substantive member of the committee from 31 January 2020.

## Chair's foreword

This inquiry was established to examine aspects of the planned conversion of the Sydenham-Bankstown line from heavy rail to metro, being the southwest part of the Sydney Metro City & Southwest project.

From the outset, I note the strong input by stakeholders and community groups to this inquiry. The committee received a high volume of submissions, pro forma and additional evidence on the wide range of issues relevant to the inquiry, and I thank all inquiry participants for contributing their views and expertise on a detailed and complex area of public planning and infrastructure.

During the course of this inquiry, serious questions were raised as to the adequacy of the business case supporting the project. There were concerns about whether alternatives had been appropriately considered, how transport planning aligned with land use planning, the suitability of metro relative to heavy rail and the project's overall value for money.

In particular, the publication of a summary, rather than the full business case, was a key concern for many stakeholders who argued that there was a lack of transparency regarding the project. This perception, combined with the potential negative impacts on the rail network, the scale of disruption during construction, and the clear long term disadvantages for some commuters, particularly those west of Bankstown, has resulted in some stakeholders lacking confidence in the project.

Overall, the committee does not believe that the project enjoys strong community support. It also does not believe that the case and rationale for Sydney Metro Southwest has been clearly made by the NSW Government. Consequently, and notwithstanding dissent from government members, the committee recommends the Sydney Metro Southwest project not proceed and that Sydney Metro terminate at Sydenham. This will allow project funds to be spent instead on developing new rail corridors to communities which currently do not have rail services and on making improvements to the existing Sydney Trains network, such as through digital signalling.

The committee has also made recommendations to address other key concerns related to the project, including publication of the business case, transparency regarding future public-private-partnerships, and improvements to community consultation processes.

In the event that the project does proceed, the committee believes that further consideration of certain aspects of the project are required to ensure optimal outcomes are achieved. In this regard, the committee has made recommendations relating to services for affected stations west of Bankstown, the design of the Bankstown interchange, project resourcing for local councils, and conservation of heritage and biodiversity along the corridor.

While I note the dissenting statement made by government members, I am of the view that it is imperative that governments get critical state infrastructure projects right, act in the public interest and engage in genuine and meaningful consultation with communities.

On behalf of the committee, I express thanks to all who participated in this inquiry. I would also like to thank all members of the committee for their contributions, as well as the committee secretariat and Hansard for their professional support during the inquiry.



Ms Abigail Boyd MLC

**Committee Chair**

## Recommendations

- Recommendation 1** **39**  
That the NSW Government immediately publish the full Sydney Metro City & Southwest final business case, including the final financial model and benefit cost analysis for the Metro Southwest project.
- Recommendation 2** **39**  
That the NSW Government ensure that any future projects with private partners outline more explicitly the benefits that the government foresees from privatisation in comparison with a project which would result in the relevant public transport assets and services being held in public hands.
- Recommendation 3** **40**  
That the NSW Government not proceed with the Metro Southwest project, leaving the Sydney Metro to terminate at Sydenham, and that project funds are instead spent on connecting new communities to rail services and improving existing rail services (for example, through digital signalling).
- Recommendation 4** **40**  
That the NSW Government review its consultation processes and develop and implement a mandatory consultation strategy which is focused on genuine and meaningful community consultation.
- Recommendation 5** **66**  
That the NSW Government restore regular direct services to the city via Lidcombe for those stations west of Bankstown affected by the conversion.
- Recommendation 6** **67**  
That the NSW Government ensure that all heritage aspects of the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor, including train stations themselves, are retained and protected for future generations.
- Recommendation 7** **67**  
That Sydney Metro and Transport for NSW review the design for the Bankstown interchange, in collaboration with the Department of Planning and Bankstown Local Council.
- Recommendation 8** **67**  
That the NSW Government provide additional resources to Inner West Council and Canterbury Bankstown Council for the purposes of collaborating on the Metro Southwest project, to ensure optimal project outcomes can be achieved.
- Recommendation 9** **68**  
That the NSW Government review the biodiversity management strategy for Metro Southwest, including vegetation and fencing requirements, to ensure that all wildlife and vegetation in the affected rail corridor experience minimal project impacts and are adequately protected and supported in recovery.

## Conduct of inquiry

The terms of reference for the inquiry were self-referred by the committee on 22 August 2019.

The committee received 105 submissions and 6 supplementary submissions.

The committee also received 1,490 responses to nine pro formas, based on pro forma campaigns arranged by Locals for Metro Southwest, Save T3 Bankstown Line, Restore Inner West Line and the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance.

The committee held three public hearings at Parliament House in Sydney on 6 November 2019, 7 November 2019 and 10 December 2019.

Inquiry related documents are available on the committee's website, including submissions, hearing transcripts, tabled documents and answers to questions on notice.



# Chapter 1 Overview of the Metro Southwest project

As part of the Sydney Metro City & Southwest project the section of the Sydney Trains network between Sydenham and Bankstown is being converted from heavy rail to metro. This chapter provides an overview of Sydney Metro and the development of the Metro City & Southwest project. Relevant transport and planning strategies, which provide the rationale for the project, are also outlined.

## The Metro project

- 1.1** The Sydney Metro City & Southwest project relates to the broader vision the NSW Government has for a metro network throughout Sydney. Before focusing on the specifics of the Sydney Metro Southwest project, this section will look at the Sydney Metro project more broadly, and how this transport option became part of the way forward for the government.
- 1.2** Sydney Metro is a new, stand alone, rail network for Greater Sydney, and currently 'Australia's biggest public transport project'.<sup>3</sup> The Sydney Metro network is designed as a city shaping network which will provide access to Greater Sydney's largest centres and link these centres together.<sup>4</sup> The network is expected to transform Sydney by offering a modern high-capacity rail service which will 'make customer journeys easy' and 'deliver economic benefits by enhancing connectivity between business and people'.<sup>5</sup>
- 1.3** In comparison to the existing double-deck trains on the heavy rail network operated by Sydney Trains, the Sydney Metro rail network utilises an automated high frequency system of single-deck driverless trains. Sydney Metro is also promoted by the NSW Government as having the following features:
- no timetables
  - opal ticketing
  - customer service assistants
  - platform screen doors
  - fully-accessible stations
  - fast, safe and reliable
  - new-generation metro trains
  - continuous mobile phone coverage
  - 98 per cent on time running
  - two multi-purpose areas per train
  - wheelchair spaces and priority seating
  - emergency intercoms and help points
  - level access between platform and train
  - heating and air-conditioning
  - real time travel information
  - fully automated railway.<sup>6</sup>

### Sydney's Rail Future: The 'preferred option'

- 1.4** Sydney Metro emerged as the 'preferred option' for future rail transport for Sydney in *Sydney's Rail Future*, a key component of the *2012 NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan*.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 4.

<sup>4</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 8.

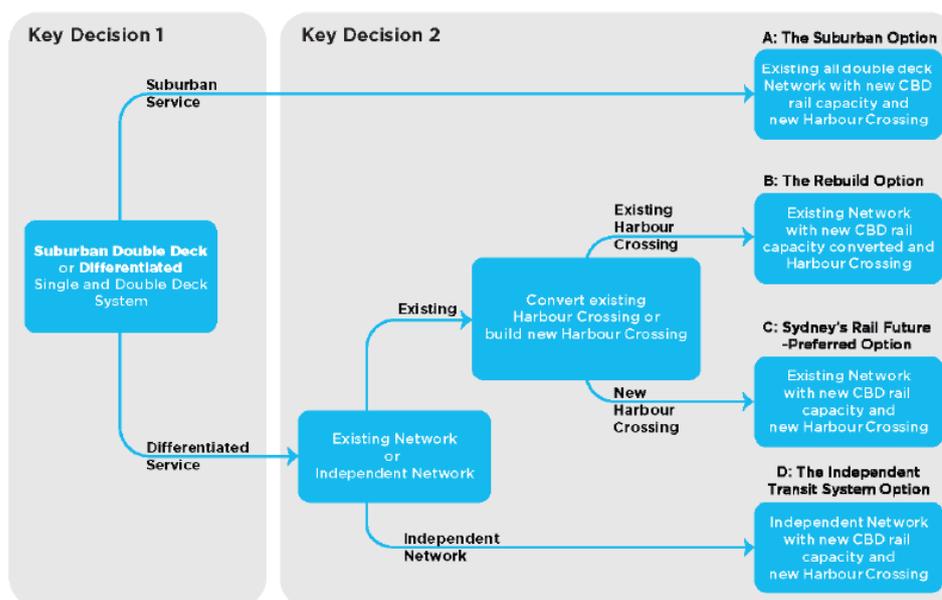
<sup>5</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.2, p 61.

<sup>6</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.4, p 12.

<sup>7</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, pp 8-17.

- 1.5 As shown in Figure 1 below, four alternative rail transport options, A, B, C, and D, were considered in determining the preferred option for the Sydney rail network. These options were reviewed in two steps or 'key decisions'.
- 1.6 Key Decision 1 made an assessment of the existing network, which determined that 'A: The Suburban Option' 'would not meet estimated future demand'.<sup>8</sup> It was also determined that it would not address certain network issues, these being: existing bottlenecks, congestion in the Sydney CBD, capacity challenges and capability challenges.<sup>9</sup>

**Figure 1 Sydney's Rail Future Master Planning Decision Tree.**



*Submission 71, NSW Government, p 9.*

- 1.7 As part of Key Decision 2, a total of '15 rail network development opportunities were considered' within the four alternative options. These options were assessed against certain criteria, including: customer focus, network capacity, network resilience, delivery risk and effectiveness.<sup>10</sup>
- 1.8 Specific key challenges and considerations for the rail network included: population growth, peak hour congestion in the Sydney CBD, the Barangaroo development, anticipated demand reaching or exceeding capacity by 2031, managing services where multiple lines converge into the City Circle: 'network bottlenecks', and the utilisation of a second harbour crossing.<sup>11</sup>
- 1.9 Following consideration of these options, including consultation and independent review, 'Sydney's Rail Future' was determined. Referred to as 'Rail Future C' or 'the preferred option', *Sydney's Rail Future* proposed that the rail network have three tiers of service: single deck metro services (formerly called rapid transit), double deck suburban services and double deck intercity

<sup>8</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 9.

<sup>9</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 9.

<sup>10</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 8.

<sup>11</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 9 and Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.8, pp 5-9.

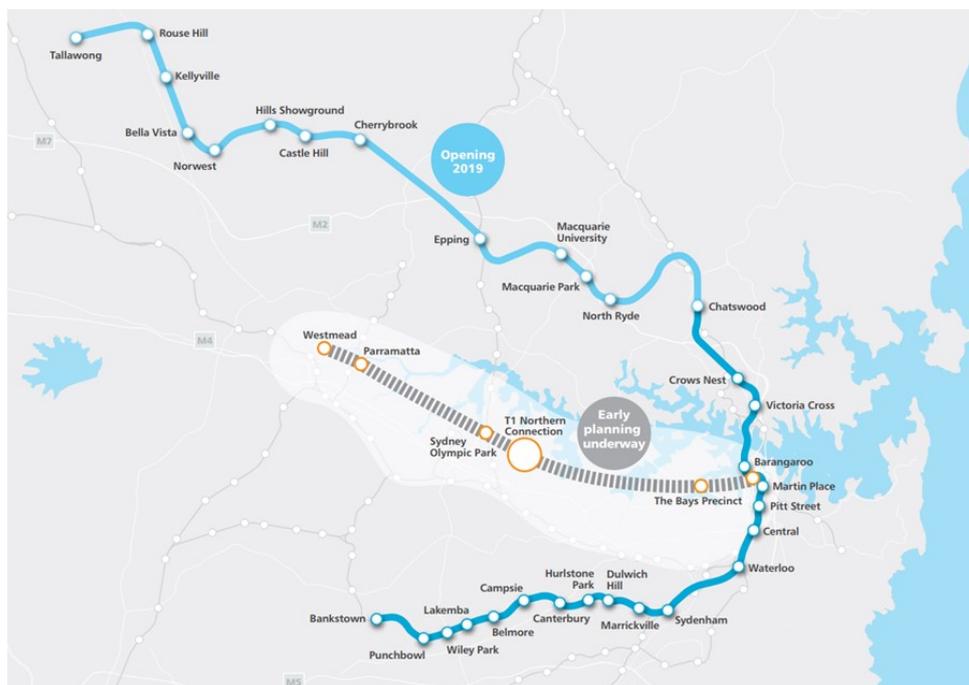
services.<sup>12</sup> The preferred option also included 'a metro network integrated with the existing network', along with a new Sydney Harbour crossing.<sup>13</sup>

**1.10** Sydney's Rail Future was further developed into a five stage program which would address operational efficiencies, network efficiencies, a new rapid transit (metro) system, a second harbour crossing and a southern sector conversion.<sup>14</sup> The Sydney Metro project delivers the later three stages of this program.<sup>15</sup>

**1.11** Following *Sydney's Rail Future*, to date the Sydney Metro network has developed in several stages, as shown in Figure 2 below:

- Sydney Metro Northwest: which opened in 2019 and includes 13 stations along a 36 kilometre line from Tallawong to Chatswood.
- Sydney Metro City & Southwest: which is under construction and due to be opened in 2024. This includes 19 stations along a 30 kilometre line from Chatswood to Bankstown via a new crossing under Sydney Harbour, new city stations and line conversion between Sydenham and Bankstown.
- Sydney Metro West: is anticipated to provide a new rail link between Parramatta and Sydney. Planning is underway and scheduled for completion in the late 2020's.

**Figure 2 Map of the Sydney Metro project**



*Transport for NSW, Sydney Metro City & Southwest – Sydenham to Bankstown Upgrade, Submissions Report, p 12.*

<sup>12</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 10.

<sup>13</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, pp 9-10.

<sup>14</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 11.

<sup>15</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 11.

### **Sydney Metro City & Southwest**

- 1.12** This inquiry relates to Sydney Metro's second stage, the Sydney Metro City & Southwest project, with a particular focus on Metro Southwest. The project is comprised of:
- Metro City: extending the underground Sydney Metro Northwest line from Chatswood 17.1 kilometres under Sydney Harbour and through the Sydney CBD to Sydenham; and
  - Metro Southwest: converting the 13.4 kilometres of the Sydney Trains T3 Bankstown Line, between Sydenham and Bankstown, to Sydney Metro Southwest.<sup>16</sup>
- 1.13** Overall, the Sydney Metro City & Southwest project aims to provide additional rail capacity for the Sydney Trains network, as with 'the expected rate of population growth, Sydney is fast outgrowing its existing heavy rail network'.<sup>17</sup>
- 1.14** Additionally, the project aims to support Sydney as a growing, global city. The NSW Government stated that the project is critical to the continued growth of the Global Economic Corridor, which extends from Norwest, through Macquarie Park and the CBD to Sydney Airport. The corridor 'generates over 41 per cent of NSW's gross domestic product'.<sup>18</sup>
- 1.15** The Sydney Metro City & Southwest project has a range of objectives which include to:
- improve the quality of the transport experience for customers
  - provide a transport system that is able to satisfy long-term demand
  - grow public transport patronage and mode share
  - support the productivity of the Global Economic Corridor
  - serve and stimulate urban development
  - improve the resilience of the transport network
  - improve the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the public transport system
  - implement a feasible solution recognising impacts, constraints and delivery risk.<sup>19</sup>
- 1.16** The Sydney Metro Southwest component of the project is considered a Critical State Significant Infrastructure project.<sup>20</sup> There are three key documents related to the development of the Sydney Metro Southwest project:
- *Sydney Metro City & Southwest Final Business Case Summary*: which presents a summary of the Final Business Case that was prepared to enable the NSW Government to make an informed decision on the timing, scope, funding and delivery strategy for the Sydney Metro City & Southwest project.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 6.

<sup>17</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.4, p 31.

<sup>18</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.4, p 31.

<sup>19</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.4, p 24.

<sup>20</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 27.

<sup>21</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.4, p 7.

- *Sydenham to Bankstown Environmental Impact Statement [EIS]*: Sydney Metro Southwest was subject to its own environmental assessment processes. The related EIS was presented in six volumes plus appendices, containing the main Environmental Impact Statement and associated technical papers. An overview document on the project environmental assessment was also published.<sup>22</sup>
- *Sydenham to Bankstown Preferred Infrastructure Report [PIR]*: Following exhibition of the Sydenham to Bankstown EIS, a Submissions and Preferred Infrastructure Report was developed. It contained proposed project changes based on the EIS feedback. An overview document outlining proposed project changes was also published.<sup>23</sup>

- 1.17** The initial cost range for Sydney Metro City & Southwest was \$11.5 billion to \$12.5 billion.<sup>24</sup> In February 2020, it was reported in the media that due to increased construction costs, the final cost range is expected to be approximately \$15.5 billion.<sup>25</sup> However, this amount was contested by the NSW Government.<sup>26</sup>
- 1.18** In terms of construction, work commenced on Sydney Metro City in 2018. Predominantly through the excavation of new tunnels, Sydney Metro Northwest will be extended from Chatswood to Sydenham. New stations are to be constructed at Crows Nest, Victoria Cross, Barangaroo, Martin Place, Pitt Street, Central and Waterloo, as well as a new crossing under Sydney Harbour.<sup>27</sup>
- 1.19** Construction of Sydney Metro Southwest commenced in December 2019. It involves the conversion of the heavy rail line from Sydenham to Bankstown to metro standards, as well as works at each of the eleven stations along the line.<sup>28</sup>
- 1.20** As shown in Figure 3, Sydney Metro Southwest will require the conversion of existing heavy rail stations at Marrickville, Dulwich Hill, Hurlstone Park, Canterbury, Campsie, Belmore, Lakemba, Wiley Park, and Punchbowl. Sydenham and Bankstown stations will also be expanded to include a metro station, facilitating interchanges between the Sydney Metro and Sydney Trains networks.

<sup>22</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.6, p 26.

<sup>23</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.7, p 3.

<sup>24</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.4, p 7.

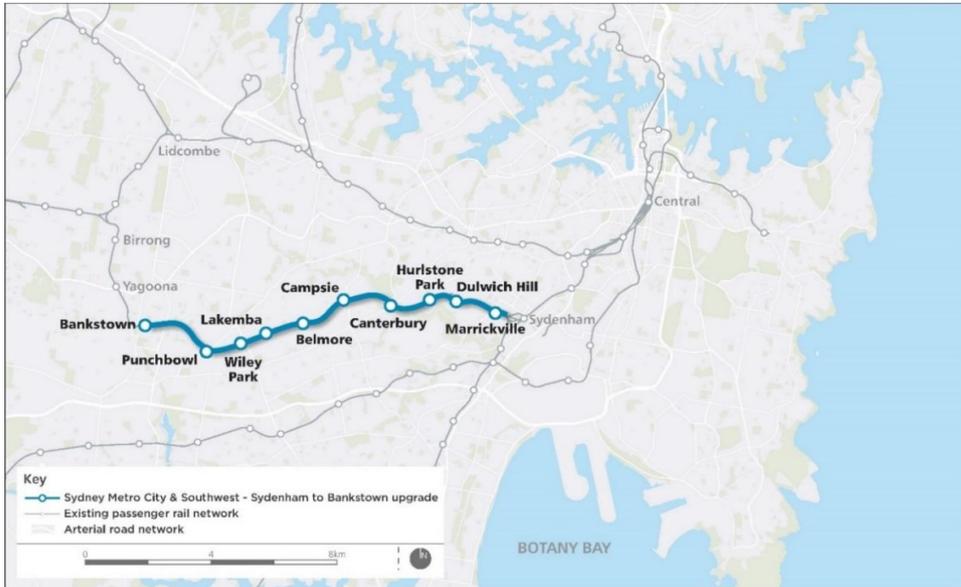
<sup>25</sup> Jessica Kidd, 'NSW Government confirms \$3b budget blowout on Metro City and Southwest', *ABC News*, 21 February 2020, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-02-21/nsw-government-confirms-three-billion-metro-budget-blowout/11986968>.

<sup>26</sup> Evidence, Budget Estimates 2019-2020, The Hon. Andrew Constance, Minister for Transport and Roads, 11 March 2020, pp 12-18.

<sup>27</sup> Sydney Metro, *About Sydney Metro City & Southwest*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/citysouthwest/project-overview>.

<sup>28</sup> Sydney Metro, *Sydenham to Bankstown*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/citysouthwest/sydenham-bankstown>.

**Figure 3 Map of Sydney Metro Southwest**



*Transport for NSW, Sydney Metro City & Southwest – Sydenham to Bankstown Upgrade, Submissions Report, p 17.*

1.21 These stations currently form part of the Sydney Trains T3 Bankstown Line which operated between Liverpool or Lidcombe and the Sydney City Circle via Bankstown (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4 Map of Sydney Trains T3 Bankstown Line**



*Transport for NSW, Sydney Rail Network Map (T3 segment)*

1.22 Following conversion, Sydney Trains will continue to service the remainder of the T3 line, with ‘trains operating between Liverpool, Bankstown and Lidcombe stations on the redesigned T3 Bankstown Line’.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 23.

- 1.23** Sydney Metro City & Southwest is purported to deliver network wide benefits for Sydney Trains. The NSW Government maintains that Sydney Metro Southwest will remove the T3 line from the ‘bottleneck’ around Sydenham where the T3, T8 and T2 lines merge, as well as redirecting T3 trains away from the City Circle and onto the Sydney Metro City corridor. According to the NSW Government, this change will reduce the complexity of the Sydney Trains network, which along with ‘signalling and infrastructure upgrades’, will assist to ‘increase the capacity of train services entering the Sydney CBD’, improve capacity at stations around the City Circle, and enable improvements in services across the heavy rail network.<sup>30</sup>
- 1.24** The conversion of the Sydenham to Bankstown segment of the T3 Bankstown Line is also purported to deliver the following local benefits:
- increased service frequency with 15 trains an hour in each direction at all stations during peak travel periods
  - station upgrades, including improved station access and interchange facilities
  - fully accessible stations and rail line, with level access between the train and the platform
  - retention and restoration of heritage buildings such as ticket offices and platform buildings
  - a new concourse to connect metro to light rail at Dulwich Hill
  - improved public domain
  - direct access to new Sydney Metro network
  - access to rail interchanges at Bankstown, Sydenham, Central and Martin Place.<sup>31</sup>
- 1.25** To facilitate the conversion to metro, stations between Sydenham and Bankstown on the T3 Bankstown Line will each experience short closures throughout the construction period. An additional final line closure, of three to six months, will occur immediately before the commencement of Sydney Metro services in 2024.<sup>32</sup>
- 1.26** As detailed in the *Sydenham to Bankstown Submissions and Preferred Infrastructure Report*, project construction and stations closures (known as rail possessions) are anticipated to have local traffic, transport and access impacts for residents and commuters.<sup>33</sup>
- 1.27** During station closure periods, Temporary Transport Plans will be implemented specifically for each rail possession, as not all possessions will be the same or affect all stations.<sup>34</sup> These arrangements will include the provision of dedicated bus services and amended rail services for the affected stations.<sup>35</sup> Consideration will also be given to wider service and management plans, which will include additional alternative rail and bus services, bus priority measures, the promotion of active transport, and identification of appropriate management controls.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 5 and pp 13-15.

<sup>31</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, pp 7, 21 and 22.

<sup>32</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 24.

<sup>33</sup> Sydney Metro, *Sydenham to Bankstown Submissions and Preferred Infrastructure Report: Volume Two – Appendices: Appendix D - Traffic, transport and access assessment*, p 1.

<sup>34</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.6, p 30.

<sup>35</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 24.

<sup>36</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.6, p 30.

- 1.28 On completion, Sydney Metro City & Southwest will be operated under the existing public private partnership contract for Sydney Metro North West Operations, Trains and Systems.<sup>37</sup>

### Timeline of key project decisions and activities for Sydney Metro Southwest

The following timeline outlines the key decisions and activities which occurred during the progress of the Sydney Metro Southwest project.

- 4 June 2015: funding for the Sydney Metro was secured as part of the NSW Government's \$20 billion Rebuilding NSW plan<sup>38</sup>
- June 2015: community consultation commenced for Sydney Metro City & Southwest<sup>39</sup>
- October 2016: the final business case summary report for the project was released<sup>40</sup>
- 14 June 2017: Infrastructure Australia provided a project evaluation<sup>41</sup>
- 13 September to 8 November 2017: public exhibition of the Environmental Impact Statement following lodgment of a State Significant Infrastructure application for Sydney Metro Southwest by Sydney Metro<sup>42</sup>
- 20 June and 18 July 2018: public exhibition of the Preferred Infrastructure Report and Submissions Report which included project changes resulting from community desire to retain station heritage<sup>43</sup>
- 12 December 2018: Formal planning approval from the Minister for Planning was granted<sup>44</sup>
- 6 June 2019: Sydney Metro announced a reduction in planned construction closures for Sydney Metro Southwest<sup>45</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Evidence, Mr Jon Lamonte, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Metro, 10 December 2019, p 16.

<sup>38</sup> Media release, Hon Mike Baird MP, Premier and Hon Andrew Constance MP, Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, 'Funding secured: Sydney Metro to be a reality', 4 June 2015.

<sup>39</sup> Sydney Metro, *Chatswood to Sydenham Environmental Impact Statement*, 2016, p 94.

<sup>40</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.4.

<sup>41</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.5.

<sup>42</sup> NSW Planning and Environment, *Major Project Assessments*, [http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view\\_job&job\\_id=8256](http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=8256).

<sup>43</sup> Sydney Metro, *Sydenham to Bankstown Submissions Report*, September 2018, [https://www.sydneymetro.info/sites/default/files/document-library/Sydenham\\_to\\_Bankstown\\_Submissions\\_Report.pdf](https://www.sydneymetro.info/sites/default/files/document-library/Sydenham_to_Bankstown_Submissions_Report.pdf) and Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.7.

<sup>44</sup> Sydney Metro, *City and Southwest Planning and Compliance*, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/citysouthwest/environment-planning>.

<sup>45</sup> Sydney Metro, *Reduced closures, heritage retained in metro upgrade of Bankstown line*, 6 June 2019, <https://www.sydneymetro.info/article/reduced-closures-heritage-retained-metro-upgrade-bankstown-line>.

- December 2019: NSW Government announced the Sydney Metro North West Operations, Trains, and Systems public private partnership contract would be augmented to include operation of Sydney Metro City & Southwest<sup>46</sup>
- 24 December 2019 and 5 January 2020: First temporary station closure occurred between Campsie and Sydenham<sup>47</sup>
- February 2020: An options paper relating to future services on the reconfigured Sydney Trains T3 Bankstown Line was published for comment.<sup>48</sup>

## Transport policy and strategy

- 1.29** Since 2012 the NSW Government asserts that it has adopted an approach to transport planning which has 'a long term vision for our communities', achieved by aligning transport network planning with consideration of land use.<sup>49</sup> Consequently, evidence received during this inquiry often related to the interconnected strategic plans for transport and land use in Greater Sydney.
- 1.30** The Sydney Metro Southwest project was considered in this context, among other key transport and planning strategies. These will be outlined below, as they are considered relevant to the policy rationale for the Sydney Metro City & Southwest project.

### Future Transport Strategy 2056

- 1.31** In March 2018 the Future Transport 2056 strategy was released by the NSW Government. Replacing the *2012 Long Term Transport Master Plan for Sydney*, this strategy provided a forty year vision for transport in New South Wales and introduced an 'overarching integrated transport and land-use planning strategy' for Greater Sydney.<sup>50</sup>
- 1.32** The *Future Transport Strategy 2056* and the associated *Greater Sydney Services and Infrastructure Plan* sought to address the opportunities and challenges facing Sydney and to sustain global competitiveness, by supporting the Greater Sydney Commission's vision for Greater Sydney. The planning approach focuses on:
- supporting growth in Greater Sydney
  - sustaining and enhancing Greater Sydney as a global city
  - harnessing technology for the benefit of customers
  - a vision for Greater Sydney as a metropolis of three cities including the Eastern Harbour City, Central River City and Western Parkland City

<sup>46</sup> Evidence, Mr Lamonte, 10 December 2019, p 16.

<sup>47</sup> Transport for NSW, *Buses replace trains for the T3 Bankstown Line upgrade From 24 December 2019*, [http://data.mysydney.nsw.gov.au/documents/MET028C\\_TTP+-+Information+Brox+BAU+Version+v10.pdf](http://data.mysydney.nsw.gov.au/documents/MET028C_TTP+-+Information+Brox+BAU+Version+v10.pdf).

<sup>48</sup> Transport for NSW, *Planning for rail services west of Bankstown station in 2024* (5 February 2020), <https://yoursay.transport.nsw.gov.au/west-of-Bankstown>.

<sup>49</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 8.

<sup>50</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 8.

- a vision for a 30 minute city
- a road and rail network comprising city-shaping corridors, city-serving corridors, and centre-servicing corridors.<sup>51</sup>

**1.33** *Future Transport Strategy 2056* also aims to provide a transport network strategy in which future economic and population growth can be accommodated ‘through long term, agile transport planning that supports a productive economy, liveable communities and more sustainable transport solutions’.<sup>52</sup> A key rail transport component was the continued development of Sydney Metro.

**1.34** The strategy also emphasised the use of ‘co-operative design’ or ‘co-design’, ‘as a new approach to planning’, through which ‘customers, industry and communities’ collaborate during both the design process and on an ongoing basis. This approach aims to ‘deliver an end result that meets stakeholder’s needs’, while also ensuring stakeholders can contribute in ‘making planning decisions’.<sup>53</sup>

### **Key transport and land use policies and strategies**

**1.35** A number of transport and planning policies and strategies are relevant to the Sydney Metro City & Southwest project. Key documents discussed during the inquiry include:

- *NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan*: which ‘sets the path that will deliver the transport system we need, with a strong focus on customer needs, integration, modernisation and meeting projected growth’.<sup>54</sup>
- *Sydney’s Rail Future*: ‘a plan to transform and modernise Sydney’s rail network so that it can grow with our population and meet the needs of customers into the future’.<sup>55</sup>
- *Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Corridor Strategy*: which was ‘a strategic planning framework to guide future development and infrastructure delivery throughout the corridor over the next 20 years... [identifying] opportunities for additional housing and jobs around each station and the infrastructure required to support future growth’.<sup>56</sup>
- *Greater Sydney Region Plan: A Metropolis of Three Cities*: which ‘presents a vision and innovative actions for managing Greater Sydney’s growth and enhancing its status as one of the most liveable global cities. It was also the first to be prepared concurrently with Future Transport 2056 and the State Infrastructure Strategy, aligning land use, transport and infrastructure planning to reshape Greater Sydney as three unique but connected cities’.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.2, pp 4-7.

<sup>52</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.1, p 6.

<sup>53</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.1, p 10.

<sup>54</sup> Transport for NSW, *NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan*, December 2012, p 3.

<sup>55</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.8, p 9.

<sup>56</sup> NSW Department of Planning and Environment, *Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Corridor Strategy*, October 2015, p 2.

<sup>57</sup> Greater Sydney Commission, *Greater Sydney Region Plan: A Metropolis of Three Cities*, March 2018, p 3.

- *Greater Sydney Services and Infrastructure Plan*: which provides a transport strategy for the five Greater Sydney Districts to achieve the 30-minute three city metropolis envisioned for Sydney by the Greater Sydney Commission.<sup>58</sup>
- *Infrastructure NSW: 2012 20-year State Infrastructure Strategy*: a prioritised and costed long term infrastructure strategy providing 'independent advice to Government on the priority infrastructure investments and reforms needed to reverse current productivity trends'.<sup>59</sup>
- *Infrastructure NSW: State Infrastructure Strategy Update 2014*: 'Infrastructure NSW's independent advice to Government on the next round of critical infrastructure priorities for NSW'.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.2, pp 2-4.

<sup>59</sup> Infrastructure NSW, *20-year State Infrastructure Strategy*, 2012, p 6.

<sup>60</sup> Infrastructure NSW, *State Infrastructure Strategy Update 2014*, November 2014, p 6.



## Chapter 2 The case for Metro Southwest

This chapter begins by providing an overview of the support and opposition to the Metro Southwest project. It then discusses the case for Metro Southwest, including concerns stakeholders expressed about the business case and assessment of alternative transport solutions. Other concerns related to the decision to convert the line from Sydenham to Bankstown to metro are then examined, including the suitability of metro for that line, whether conversion will improve capacity and connectivity and whether community consultation has been effective.

### Overview of support and opposition to Metro Southwest

- 2.1** During the inquiry the committee received evidence both in support of and in opposition to the Metro Southwest project. While this chapter and the next will consider a range of concerns related to the project, this section will provide a snapshot as to overall support and opposition to the project.
- 2.2** Some stakeholders and community members expressed their support for the project. This included Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, who stated that it was a ‘strong supporter of the Sydenham to Bankstown conversion’.<sup>61</sup> Mr Wally Mehanna, Chief Executive Officer, explained that the Chamber of Commerce saw the introduction of an independent metro network as beneficial for local businesses, investment and employment, ‘which will enhance the prosperity of the region’.<sup>62</sup>
- 2.3** Locals for Metro Southwest also informed the committee that there was some community support for the conversion. Mr Wes Brown, a representative for the group, stated that Metro Southwest is an ‘exciting opportunity to benefit from twenty-first century infrastructure’. He added: ‘Our community does want the conversion to metro. We want to be part of the future’.<sup>63</sup>
- 2.4** In addition, the committee received 308 responses to a pro forma which supported the Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion.<sup>64</sup>
- 2.5** Other stakeholders did not support the project. In particular, local councils within the corridor indicated that they had a range of concerns about the project. Canterbury Bankstown Council advised the committee it ‘could not support the Metro Southwest concept in its proposed form’. It further stated that the ‘proposed concept entrenches inequitable investment in infrastructure for the City of Canterbury Bankstown and dismisses the aspirations for the strategic centres at Bankstown and Campsie’.<sup>65</sup>
- 2.6** The Inner West Council also had concerns about the project, stating:

<sup>61</sup> Submission 51, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, p 1.

<sup>62</sup> Evidence, Mr Wally Mehanna, Chief Executive Officer, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, 6 November 2019, p 23.

<sup>63</sup> Evidence, Mr Wes Brown, Member, Locals for Metro Southwest, 6 November 2019, pp 23-24. See also Submission 4, Name suppressed; Submission 42, Name suppressed; Submission 88, Mr Michael Katz.

<sup>64</sup> Pro forma C.

<sup>65</sup> Submission 66, Canterbury Bankstown Council, p 2.

Council does not accept that the case for the Sydney Metro has been adequately made. Our community is not prepared to accept the disruption that would be caused by this project, that we are not convinced will benefit our community or Sydney as a whole.<sup>66</sup>

**2.7** The committee also received submissions from a number of individuals and community groups who expressed their strong opposition to and concerns about the Metro Southwest project, including the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, Hurlstone Park Association and Marrickville Residents' Action Group.<sup>67</sup>

**2.8** The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, which represents ten community groups from along the corridor, expressed opposition to the project, stating:

This project is inherently flawed, has been incorrectly attributed to a heritage-rich, already dense corridor and that has a functioning historic heavy rail line; it lacks the social licence to proceed and is not in the public interest. The supposed benefits such as accessibility improvements can be achieved without a Metro conversion, and can be designed to fit in with heritage stations.<sup>68</sup>

**2.9** In addition, the committee received 1,182 responses to nine different pro forma which opposed conversion of the line between Sydenham and Bankstown.<sup>69</sup>

## **The case for Metro Southwest**

**2.10** As discussed in Chapter 1, Metro Southwest was developed during long term master planning for Sydney's rail network which, in part, identified a need for a metro network and a southern sector conversion.

**2.11** During the inquiry, the robustness of the decision making process which underpinned the case for Metro Southwest was questioned. This section examines key areas of concern, relating to the transparency and adequacy of the business case, the consideration of alternatives and the alignment of transport and land use in network planning. The suitability of metro for the Sydenham to Bankstown line is also examined.

### **The adequacy and transparency of the business case**

**2.12** A number of stakeholders raised concerns in relation to the project's business case. As noted in Chapter 1, to date, only a summary of the business case has been made publicly available. This was a point of contention for some stakeholders who alleged that the business case provided an inadequate assessment of the project.

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<sup>66</sup> Submission 62, Inner West Council, p 1.

<sup>67</sup> See Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 1; Submission 38, Hurlstone Park Association, p 1; Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 1; Submission 28, Ms Kate Lumley; Submission 33, Ms Barbara McKellar and Mr Erik Johansen; Submission 36, Ms Anne Nolan; Submission 68, Mr John Rotherham; Submission 74, Dr Safwat Riad; Submission 99, Name suppressed.

<sup>68</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, pp 1 and 34.

<sup>69</sup> Pro forma A, B, D, E, F, G, H and I.

- 2.13** Throughout the inquiry, the NSW Government defended the integrity of the business case, maintaining that it 'documents the comprehensive work undertaken in the project development phase'.<sup>70</sup>
- 2.14** The NSW Government explained that the business case detailed the 'extensive program of detailed planning and analysis' undertaken during project development and that a '104 page summary of the Final Business Case is publicly available on the Sydney Metro website'.<sup>71</sup> The committee was also advised that the business case complied with required frameworks, with analysis of the project's benefits undertaken by specialist expert advisors, in accordance with state, national and international economic appraisal guidelines.<sup>72</sup>
- 2.15** Several stakeholders, however, were critical of the fact that the full business case has not been published, and how this has limited the project's transparency and ability for detailed public review. The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, Hurlstone Park Association, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, as well as individual inquiry participants, all expressed views in this regard.<sup>73</sup>
- 2.16** Mr John Austen, a retired transport economist, noted that the purpose of a business case is to 'inform decision makers whether a proposed action is aligned with the business' core directions and is likely to contribute to its future value'. He stated that 'the accuracy, thoroughness and impartiality of ... a business case ... are fundamental for democratic accountability'.<sup>74</sup>
- 2.17** Mr Austen was critical of the summary business case published for the project, stating:
- It is not a summary of a business case appropriate for government consideration. The document cannot be used in serious analysis. The point of publishing such a document is unclear. ... Its defects are so serious as to undermine public confidence in Government decision making. It would have been better for it not to be published.<sup>75</sup>
- 2.18** Several stakeholders called for the full business case to be published.<sup>76</sup> The Hurlstone Park Association also suggested that legislative reforms were required to introduce additional provisions for critical state significant infrastructure projects relating to community support and the publication of project business cases.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 12.

<sup>71</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 12.

<sup>72</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 12.

<sup>73</sup> See Submission 30, Mr John Austen, p 6; Submission 31, Mr Michael Summers, p 1; Submission 32, Ms Kathryn Harwood, p 1; Submission 36, Ms Anne Nolan, p 1; Submission 37, Ms Marie Healy, p 2; Submission 38, Hurlstone Park Association, p 2; Submission 65, Professor Ian Tyrrell, p 1; Submission 69, Ms Heather Davie, p 2; Submission 73, Ms Louise Dortins, p 1; Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 3; Submission 95, Ms Andrea Turner, p 1; Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 5; Submission 102, Mr Roydon Ng, p 39; Evidence, Mr Ken Welsh, Team Lead Strategic Transport Planning, Inner West Council, 6 November 2019, p 3.

<sup>74</sup> Submission 30, Mr John Austen, p 3.

<sup>75</sup> Submission 30, Mr John Austen, p 5.

<sup>76</sup> See Submission 28, Ms Kate Lumley, p 1; Submission 69, Ms Heather Davie, p 23; Submission 73, Ms Louise Dortins, p 3; Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 3; Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 3.

<sup>77</sup> Submission 38, Hurlstone Park Association, pp 11-12.

- 2.19** Despite the limited information available, the committee nevertheless heard a range of concerns which questioned the adequacy of the business case and decision making processes for the project. For instance in Mr Austen's view, the summary business case 'does not refer to any reasonable options' and 'it provides no real reasons for decisions on those core aspects [of metro] or extension to Bankstown – perhaps because decisions were made in advance of the business case'.<sup>78</sup>
- 2.20** According to Marrickville Residents' Action Group, the summary business case 'is a seriously flawed document' and as the full business case has not been released and there are redacted numbers in the summary, it is 'impossible to determine how cost benefits have been calculated'.<sup>79</sup>
- 2.21** Another issue raised in relation to the business case related to the calculation of the benefit cost ratio for the project.
- 2.22** The *Metro City & Southwest Final Business Case Summary* noted that 'given the Project's cost range of \$11.5 to \$12.5 billion' the benefit cost ratio is 'about 1.47 to about 1.6 with a midpoint benefit cost ratio of 1.53'. Other benefit cost ratios were 'redacted to ensure value-for-money' during project tendering and procurement processes.<sup>80</sup>
- 2.23** However, some stakeholders disputed the process used to calculate this ratio. In particular, the assumptions used to assess the benefit cost ratio of the project were questioned.
- 2.24** In reviewing the costing information available in the Metro Southwest Environmental Impact Statement [EIS], Mr Mathew Hounsell, a Transport Analyst and Planner, asserted that:
- the 'EIS [is] incorrectly assuming that certain problems could only be rectified with the metro conversion', such as accessibility issues
  - the 'EIS assumes the benefits of the project are dis-benefits for the 'do-nothing scenario... this effectively counts the project benefits twice'
  - 'population projections used for the EIS, are based upon the policy to focus population growth within the Bankstown corridor'.<sup>81</sup>
- 2.25** The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance asserted that 'the business case appears to have grossly over-inflated benefits and under-estimated the costs' adding that 'it provides no explanation of how the benefits have been calculated' and the negative costs associated with project construction for Metro Southwest are absent from the benefit cost analysis.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Submission 30, Mr John Austen, p 5. See also Evidence, Mr Alex Wardrop, Railway Operations Researcher and Consultant, 7 November 2019, p 3.

<sup>79</sup> Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 5.

<sup>80</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.4, pp 7 and 26.

<sup>81</sup> Answers to questions on notice, Mr Mathew Hounsell, Transport Analyst and Planner, 16 December 2019, pp 5-6. See also Submission 30, Mr John Austen, p 3; Submission 69, Ms Heather Davie, p 4; Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 6.

<sup>82</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 5. See also Submission 69, Ms Heather Davie, pp 2-4; Submission 77, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc, p 1.

- 2.26** In addition, the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, claimed that the business case articulates just under \$13 billion of economic benefits for the project, and that 'assuming the metro extension will cost \$12b, ... this represents a benefit cost ratio of barely 1:1- not 1.53:1'.<sup>83</sup>
- 2.27** During the inquiry, Mr Austen drew the committee's attention to a previous benefit cost analysis of metro and heavy rail options for Sydney from 2011-12, reporting that:
- In 2011-12, Infrastructure NSW commissioned experts who referred to a *Sydney Strategic Economic Appraisal Long Term Rail Strategy, August 2011* by PWC. The experts reported results of benefit:cost ratios of 1.0 or less for seven long-term Sydney rail system options ...
- It appears some reported benefit:cost ratios were essentially the same for single-deck and doubledeck trains with the latter having an additional harbour crossing. ...
- Later parts of their report indicated: a preference for first increasing the utilisation of double-deck trains...<sup>84</sup>
- 2.28** The NSW Government, however, defended the benefits of the project. Mr Jon Lamonte, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Metro, highlighted to the committee that the business case was independently reviewed and evaluated by Infrastructure Australia.<sup>85</sup>
- 2.29** With regard to this review, the NSW Government noted the evaluation stated that the business case 'presented a comprehensive assessment that details the rationale for the final project route and station locations'. The review also stated that 'Infrastructure Australia is confident that the benefits of the project will exceed its estimated costs, and that the project will provide a net benefit to the Australian economy'.<sup>86</sup>

### **The assessment of alternative options**

- 2.30** The comparative analysis of Metro Southwest and alternative rail solutions was a key area of discussion during the inquiry. The committee heard concerns about whether there was adequate assessment of alternative transport solutions, both in the business case itself but also more broadly in terms of future transport planning.
- 2.31** Mr John Austen was one such inquiry participant who questioned the extent to which all alternative options were fully assessed. Mr Austen stated: 'There is no readily available public evidence of real consideration of alternatives to Metro, its core aspects, routes, or conversion of the Sydenham-Bankstown segment'.<sup>87</sup>
- 2.32** Mr Austen was also concerned that the Metro City & Southwest business case did not assess the impact of a dedicated metro harbour crossing and city route on the existing heavy rail network. Mr Austen cited a previous assessment of a similar proposal and noted that restricting

<sup>83</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 5. See also Submission 69, Ms Heather Davie, p 3; Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 1.

<sup>84</sup> Submission 30, Mr John Austen, pp 4-5.

<sup>85</sup> Evidence, Mr Jon Lamonte, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Metro, 10 December 2019, p 7.

<sup>86</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 12.

<sup>87</sup> Submission 30, Mr John Austen, p 3.

new infrastructure to metro resulted in ‘opportunity costs’ for heavy rail which, if considered, ‘it is almost certain metro would be deemed economically non-viable’.<sup>88</sup>

**2.33** Likewise, Mr Mathew Hounsell argued that the project's 'alternatives analysis was incomplete because the rail options analysis ... resulted in the assumption that at least one rail line must be converted to metro'.<sup>89</sup> He further argued the business case was limited in its assessment as:

- the analysis of alternatives was based on incorrect assumptions
- the long-planned sextuplication from Sydenham to Erskineville should have been considered as an alternative
- there was a lack of analysis of the 'do-nothing' scenario', and uncertainty 'if a detailed analysis was undertaken'.<sup>90</sup>

**2.34** The lack of consideration of digital signalling as an alternative option for improving the rail network was also discussed with the committee. This, along with the Sydenham track duplication, are further explored from paragraph 2.72.

**2.35** The committee also received evidence that previous comparative assessments did not support conversion of the T3 Bankstown Line. For example, Mr Hounsell drew the committees attention to the 2009 *Metro Network Strategy – Corridor Assessment Report* which 'assessed strategic corridors identified previously by the department'. Mr Hounsell informed the committee under this assessment, conversion of the Bankstown line to metro was not supported:

Sydney Metro assessed strategic corridors identified previously by the department then scored the corridor's suitability for investment based on need, possible patronage, and city shaping opportunity. Sydney Metro rightly excluded those corridors where the load could be handled by improving the existing railway.

Sydney Metro ... concluded that the Bankstown Line did not merit conversion to a metro.<sup>91</sup>

**2.36** Mr Hounsell further noted that, based on an assessment of which lines would have the greatest passenger potential, 'the 2009 Sydney Metro Plan was for a North West Metro connecting to a Western Metro'.<sup>92</sup>

**2.37** In a similar vein, the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance referred the committee to Infrastructure NSW's 2012 *20-year State Infrastructure Strategy* which supported the introduction of metro but was not supportive of a proposal for metro on the Bankstown line and the Illawarra line to Hurstville.<sup>93</sup> In considering ‘what other options may exist to bring the benefits of rapid transit to more customers, sooner and at lower cost’ the report stated:

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<sup>88</sup> Submission 30, Mr John Austen, pp 4 and 7.

<sup>89</sup> Answers to questions on notice, Mr Hounsell, 16 December 2019, p 10.

<sup>90</sup> Answers to questions on notice, Mr Hounsell, 16 December 2019, pp 3 and 5-6.

<sup>91</sup> Submission 14, Mr Mathew Hounsell, p 14.

<sup>92</sup> Submission 14, Mr Mathew Hounsell, p 14.

<sup>93</sup> See Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 14; Infrastructure NSW, *20-year State Infrastructure Strategy*, 2012, pp 106-107.

The utilisation of rapid transit both south and west of the CBD appears sub-optimal. The current proposal will serve the Bankstown Line, which carries only 6,600 passengers in the peak hour, and part of the Illawarra Line which already has good access to the CBD via the Eastern Suburbs Line.”

By contrast the heaviest traffic flows outside the CBD occur on the six-track Main West Lines between Strathfield and Central. The development work undertaken on the West Metro project, indicated that this corridor through the Inner West could offer a strong market for rapid transit services.

This approach would provide high capacity metro-style services on the most congested part of the network from Strathfield to Chatswood via the CBD.<sup>94</sup>

- 2.38** Throughout the inquiry, the NSW Government maintained that all alternatives were adequately considered. Mr Jon Lamonte stated that 'the option analysis was done, which was part of the business case, and ... was described in the environmental impact statement [EIS] as well as in the business case summary'.<sup>95</sup>
- 2.39** Mr Lamonte further added that following this analysis the 'conclusion was that for both the metro and the broader system the conversion of the Sydenham to Bankstown line was in fact the best option available'.<sup>96</sup>
- 2.40** Several stakeholders pointed to criticisms expressed publicly by four former rail executives in relation to the Metro Southwest project. In a submission to Transport NSW, Mr John Brew, Mr Ron Christie, Mr Bob O'Loughlin and Mr Dick Day expressed their view that the Metro Southwest project would not achieve beneficial outcomes and would potentially have negative consequences for the network.<sup>97</sup>
- 2.41** In response to these criticisms, Mr Howard Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Trains, pointed to international approaches to rail services, which have shifted following the rail advancements offered by a 'metro-style approach'. Mr Collins commented:

I have huge respect for those people who put pen to paper—past executives of the old railway. Whilst I am probably of a similar generation I would say that I have probably worked in another place where I have seen my attitude change from the traditional type of railway to the arrival of a metro-style approach. If you go around the world, if you talk to today's experts—last week we had all the experts in town at our biggest AusRAIL conference—the technology, sliding doors, automatic trains and all those things are really things which will be of the future for every world city. It does not mean to say we are losing our fantastic Sydney Trains network. That will work even harder for us, but

<sup>94</sup> Infrastructure NSW, *20-year State Infrastructure Strategy*, 2012, p 107 and Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 14.

<sup>95</sup> Evidence, Mr Lamonte, 10 December 2019, p 6.

<sup>96</sup> Evidence, Mr Lamonte, 10 December 2019, p 7.

<sup>97</sup> See Submission 81a, KOAS (Keep Our Area Suburban), Attachment G. See also Submission 37, Ms Marie Healy, p 1; Submission 38, Hurlstone Park Association, p 3; Submission 65, Professor Ian Tyrrell, p 1; Submission 69, Ms Heather Davie, p 1; Submission 73, Ms Louise Dortins, p 1; Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 46; Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 2; Submission 102, Mr Roydon Ng, p 33.

as far as I am concerned, this is a complementary benefit, and we should not fear it; we should embrace it.<sup>98</sup>

- 2.42** However, some stakeholders questioned the comparisons to international jurisdictions. For example, Mr Austen, who reflected on the implications of the poor decisions of the Paris Metro, stating:

The inquiry should not underestimate the gravity of the situation Sydney and NSW now face as a result of the Metro decisions to date.

The decisions will permanently divide and reinforce geographic inequities in Sydney.

They will reduce access of most people in the metropolitan area and beyond to central Sydney much as the similar Paris Metro decisions did from the late 19th century in that city. The inquiry should note the efforts of the French Government over the last sixty years to attempt to remediate that unfortunate legacy.<sup>99</sup>

- 2.43** Similarly, the Marrickville Residents' Action Group noted that Paris' plans to extend their Metro have been abandoned for double-decker trains and the governments of Hong Kong and Singapore are moving to replace driverless metros with train drivers due to inefficiencies. The Group questioned 'why is our government pursuing metro conversion when other countries are abandoning them?'.<sup>100</sup>

- 2.44** Indeed, the committee heard that some stakeholders believed a prioritisation of metro, rather than robust and fulsome assessments of network capacity or development, underpinned the decision to convert part of the Bankstown line. For example, concerns were raised by Mr Roydon Ng, Co-Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line and EcoTransit Sydney that the introduction of a metro network, and consequential transport planning decisions, had been unduly influenced by 'a metro agenda'.<sup>101</sup>

- 2.45** Similarly, Mr Alex Wardrop, Railway Operations Researcher and Consultant, contended that the conversion of an existing rail line indicated 'that Transport for NSW has lost strategic direction, since construction of new railways or metros should be directed towards increasing total public transport patronage rather than cherrypicking existing patronage'.<sup>102</sup>

- 2.46** In this regard, Mr Hounsell drew the committees attention to the Environmental Impact Statement [EIS] analysis of the metro terminating at Sydenham. Mr Hounsell remarked:

... a key factor in the process was the 27,000 fewer trips on the metro during the morning peak hour if the metro was terminated at Sydenham and the Bankstown Line continued to run via the City Circle. The EIS notes that the reduced patronage risked the financial viability of the Metro already under construction. This may indicate the department consider the creation of a captive community with limited

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<sup>98</sup> Evidence, Mr Howard Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Trains, 10 December 2019, p 9.

<sup>99</sup> Submission 30, Mr John Austen, p 33.

<sup>100</sup> Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 2.

<sup>101</sup> Evidence, Mr Roydon Ng, Co-Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line, 6 November 2019, p 22, and Submission 91, EcoTransit Sydney, p 3.

<sup>102</sup> Evidence, Mr Wardrop, 7 November 2019, p 3. See also Evidence, Mr Wardrop, 7 November 2019, p 9.

public transport alternatives as an essential component of the Metro's development.<sup>103</sup>

- 2.47** The NSW Government, however, consistently defended the development of Metro Southwest as the preferred option, which aligned with its broader vision for public transport and improved capacity. It maintained that: 'Many options were considered and evaluated during the development of the project'.<sup>104</sup>
- 2.48** The NSW Government also advised that following the determination of Sydney's Rail Future 'an extensive program of detailed planning and analysis' occurred, during which the project was developed and 'informed by engagement with numerous community and industry stakeholders and [by] working closely with stakeholders across the NSW Government and local councils'.<sup>105</sup>

### **The alignment of transport solutions with land use**

- 2.49** In addition to concerns about whether alternative transport solutions were adequately assessed and the adequacy of the business case for the project, there were also concerns that the decision to proceed with Metro Southwest was influenced by potential land use opportunities rather than transport need.
- 2.50** As discussed in Chapter 1, concurrent with *Sydney's Rail Future* and *Future Transport 2056*, urban renewal plans for the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor were released. This approach aligned transport network planning with consideration of land use.<sup>106</sup>
- 2.51** Some stakeholders were concerned about this approach. For example, the Marrickville Residents' Action Group stated:

Part of the NSW Governments strategy has been to link residential up-zoning along rail corridors in order to fund rail projects. If the process becomes distorted and the conversion of rail lines, or the selection of routes or location of stations becomes a matter of how to deliver profitable projects to major corporations, rather than the provision of the best, most needed rail services to make Sydney a 30 minute city then there is a problem.<sup>107</sup>

- 2.52** This approach was, however, refuted by the NSW Government and Sydney Metro during the inquiry. In response to questions concerning the financial model for Metro Southwest, and whether the benefits from potential development, such as the sale of air-rights, were counted as part of the funding model, Mr Lamonte advised the committee that 'they are not linked', including as part of the private-public-partnership concerning operation of the line. Further, with regard to the Sydenham-Bankstown corridor, Mr Lamonte stated:

It is also probably helpful to say that there is no planned property development within the tight rail corridor that is Sydney to Bankstown. There are limited opportunities there.

<sup>103</sup> Answers to questions on notice, Mr Hounsell, 16 December 2019, p 6.

<sup>104</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 16.

<sup>105</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 12.

<sup>106</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, Appendix 7.1, p 2.

<sup>107</sup> Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 11.

Obviously we would aim to support the growth that councils want and support and liaise with the council and the department of planning in their wider aspirations.<sup>108</sup>

- 2.53** Noting the levels of urban renewal proposed for the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor, the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance stated:

It appears that lobbyists groups such as Committee for Sydney, Urban Taskforce, Property Council of NSW and Planning Institute of Australia all actively lobbied for the SW Metro as a means to act as a catalyst for development within a 400 to 800 metre radius of each of the railway stations in the corridor.

From a perusal of the submissions made to the Department of Planning and NSW Transport dating as early as 2015 these various organisations extolled the virtues of a metro and linked it to high rise development within the corridor in terms of urban renewal...<sup>109</sup>

- 2.54** In particular, decisions concerning access to the Camperdown education and health precinct were discussed during the inquiry. The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance asserted that the decision to locate a metro station at Waterloo rather than Camperdown was a direct result of considering development opportunities over an identified transport need:

The flaws in this developer driven approach can be seen in the decision to select Waterloo, rather than Sydney University/Royal Prince Alfred (USyd/RPA) as the preferred route between Central and Sydenham. USyd/RPA is a major destination for Sydney with over 45,000 daily visits. Yet the government chose Waterloo as its preferred station, primarily for the ability of the site to yield greater residential densities. Linking USyd/RPA to the rail network would have been a boon for all Sydneysiders though this commonsense destination faltered on the inability of the site to provide a residential upzone and the money that flowed from it.<sup>110</sup>

- 2.55** The University of Sydney contended that the metro alignment to Waterloo ‘will jeopardise key project objectives’. In its view, a metro station at Camperdown would be better:

Patronage assessment demonstrates that a Camperdown Metro station would be highly utilised during both peak and off-peak periods, with peak patronage at levels comparable to Redfern Station, one of the busiest stations in the existing rail network. As an attractive alternative to the existing transport options, the station would generate modal shift, inducing a significant move to rail that provides a more environmentally friendly and efficient transport outcome that benefits not only the corridor but transport across Sydney while unlocking significant network capacity, future jobs and economic growth.<sup>111</sup>

- 2.56** Indeed, a number of inquiry participants expressed the view that the conversion to metro could only be justified by the high density development proposed by the urban renewal strategy. This was despite a view that the corridor was not suitable for high density development. Community groups including Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, EcoTransit Sydney, Save Marrickville,

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<sup>108</sup> Evidence, Mr Lamonte, 10 December 2019, pp 16 and 18-19.

<sup>109</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 35.

<sup>110</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 18.

<sup>111</sup> Submission 57, University of Sydney, pp 7-8.

Marrickville Residents' Action Group, Keep Our Area Suburban, and Canterbury Racecourse Action Group, as well as other individual inquiry participants expressed views in this regard.<sup>112</sup>

- 2.57** The nature of the involvement of MTR Corporation, the current operator of the Metro Northwest, was also questioned throughout the inquiry. Inquiry participants expressed strong concerns that the corporation, which operates on a 'rail plus property' business model in Hong Kong, had undue influence over the project. Mr Colin Schroeder, Co-convenor, EcoTransit Sydney, noted that this model is used by the MTR Corporation in Hong Kong, where they get 70 per cent of revenue from real estate development. He added:

MTR Corporation has been pushing to get metro into Sydney and its business model into Sydney for many years, and now it has actually succeeded. You will see that the legislation to corporatise Sydney Metro almost mirrors the MTR business model because it gives the ultimate power to develop and acquire land around the stations, around the stabling yards for development.<sup>113</sup>

- 2.58** However, Mr Mathew Hounsell explained that there were differences between the business models for MTR Corporation and Sydney Metro. He stated that development opportunities will be released under a tender arrangement at each station:

... the development of these stations will be paid for essentially, as far as I understand it, by the State and then the development rights over the station on what they call the "plinth" will be then tendered to market. From the 2009 business cases for the Sydney Metro corporation ... there was an expectation that the State would retain the rights to tender out development over each individual station. The direct applicability of Hong Kong MTR business model is very different. I do not think it is directly applicable to this case.<sup>114</sup>

- 2.59** Mr Jon Lamonte also noted the distinction between operational transport aspects of the project and development and construction aspects of the project, saying the public private partnership [PPP] with MTR Corporation 'is simply about how to operate that [network]. There is no question about property development as part of that PPP or anything else'.<sup>115</sup>
- 2.60** Mr Lamonte also highlighted that the nature of the arrangement was determined after the decision was made to introduce metro:

Once we had decided that we were going to have a second crossing of the harbour, that it was going to be done by a single-deck metro alternative and all of the things that flowed from that, which was essentially Sydney's Rail Future through the business case and what is in the EIS [environmental impact statement] and it is that consistent trail that you have seen for many years, it was simply a question of: What is the best way of

<sup>112</sup> See Evidence, Mr Colin Schroeder, Co-convenor, EcoTransit Sydney, 7 November 2019, p 18; Submission 26, Canterbury Racecourse Action Group, p 1; Submission 81, KOAS (Keep Our Area Suburban), p 1; Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 11; Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 1; Submission 69, Ms Heather Davie, pp 14-15; and Submission 102, Mr Roydon Ng, p 39.

<sup>113</sup> Evidence, Mr Schroeder, 7 November 2019, p 19.

<sup>114</sup> Evidence, Mr Mathew Hounsell, Transport Analyst and Planner, 7 November 2019, p 4.

<sup>115</sup> Evidence, Mr Lamonte, 10 December 2019, p 17.

operating that line? That is where this particular PPP [public private partnership for the operation of metro] comes from.<sup>116</sup>

### **The suitability of metro for Sydenham to Bankstown**

**2.61** Throughout the inquiry, the committee heard a range of views regarding the introduction of a metro network and the use of single-deck high frequency rail services. Some stakeholders questioned the suitability of metro as a rail solution for the Bankstown to Sydenham corridor.

**2.62** This section provides an overview of the evidence received concerning the application of metro as a rail transport solution as proposed in Metro Southwest. Detailed examination of potential impacts in terms of capacity, connectivity, travel times and the commuter experience is outlined in Chapter 3.

**2.63** Several stakeholders expressed views regarding the best use of metro networks given their features. Mr Alex Wardrop expressed the view that Sydney was not the kind of city in which 'metros flourish', stating:

... [Sydney] does not have an urban structure that is conducive to metro operation. The places where metros flourish have high urban densities, restrictions on uses of cars and a necessity to rely on public transport and that metros are part of a transport mix...<sup>117</sup>

**2.64** Further, Mr Wardrop argued that travel distances and seating capacity were determining factors which influence the consideration of rail systems. Mr Wardrop told the committee that metro is an 'inappropriate mode for suburban rail', stating:

The choice of rail passenger vehicle depends upon its duty. If passengers only travel four kilometres to eight kilometres, such as on the London Underground, then a high-standing-area car is appropriate. On the other hand, if passengers travel 18 kilometres, 19 kilometres or more, such as on Sydney Trains, then a high-seating-level car would be appropriate.

This metro in its current form is a completely inappropriate mode for suburban rail travel...<sup>118</sup>

**2.65** Indeed, travel distances and seating capacity were key issues for a number of stakeholders who shared the view that metro was not a suitable rail option for the Sydenham to Bankstown line.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Evidence, Mr Lamonte, 10 December 2019, p 17.

<sup>117</sup> Evidence, Mr Wardrop, 7 November 2019, p 5.

<sup>118</sup> Evidence, Mr Wardrop, 7 November 2019, p 3.

<sup>119</sup> See Evidence, Ms Barbara Coorey, KOAS (Keep Our Area Suburban), 6 November 2019, p 62; Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 21; Evidence, Ms Heather Davie, Member, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, 6 November 2019, p 53; Submission 37, Dr Marie Healy, p 5.

**2.66** Travel times, the overall capacity of metro, crowding, and how Metro Southwest will integrate with the Sydney Trains network were other areas of discussion which influenced stakeholder views on the suitability of metro between Sydenham and Bankstown.<sup>120</sup>

**2.67** During the inquiry, comparisons to Sydney Trains and rail networks in other jurisdictions were made in order to illustrate the nature of the Metro Southwest proposal and its suitability. Mr Colin Schroeder from EcoTransit Sydney, a transport advocacy group which opposes Metro Southwest, expressed the view that the project was not introducing a typical metro network:

We are not opposed to metro per se. We are not mode blind. Metro does have its place, but what we are building here is not really metro. Metros typically run through medium to high density areas with maybe 500 metres between stations. I think the Paris metro averages about 520 metres between stations, whereas the metro we are building here is about 3.5 kilometres between stations on average. It is not really a metro. It is basically an underground suburban rail system with metro-sized cars on it.<sup>121</sup>

**2.68** Mr Howard Collins disagreed with stakeholders who questioned the suitability of metro, advising the committee that he considered metro as ‘the more suitable product’.<sup>122</sup>

**2.69** Mr Collins further argued that the performance of single deck metro services contributed to their suitability, stating that ‘in terms of acceleration, dwell times, boarding and alighting [metro] often make up a better benefit even if they are stopping at every station, compared with some of our semi-fast and fast services’.<sup>123</sup>

**2.70** In addition, Mr Collins discussed the nature of Sydney’s network with the committee, commenting that:

I think the difficulty with Sydney's network ... is that it does try to be three things on one line. It tries to deal with the people who live three hours away—double-deck trains, making yourself comfortable, toilets, fantastic. Then you get into suburban when double-deck is pretty good but they get pretty crowded. ... Then they almost become metro-like in the Martin Place experience where it is difficult. You have seen my staff valiantly trying to get people on and off at Town Hall and Wynyard. It is not the ideal product. What we are doing now is segregating that product and saying for this distance, which is not extreme—66 kilometres of route is actually quite possible in many cities around the world using automatic technology.<sup>124</sup>

**2.71** Indeed, in the evidence received by the committee, several inquiry participants agreed there may be potential uses for a metro network in Sydney, just not necessarily as proposed by Metro Southwest.<sup>125</sup>

<sup>120</sup> See Submission 27, Mr Alex Wardrop, p 7; Evidence, Ms Davie, 6 November 2019, p 53; Evidence, Mr Peter Olive, Interim Convenor, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, 6 November 2019, p 11.

<sup>121</sup> Evidence, Mr Schroeder, 7 November 2019, p 18. See also Submission 77, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc, pp 3-4.

<sup>122</sup> Evidence, Mr Collins, 10 December 2019, p 5.

<sup>123</sup> Evidence, Mr Collins, 10 December 2019, p 10.

<sup>124</sup> Evidence, Mr Collins, 10 December 2019, p 10.

<sup>125</sup> See Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 14; Submission 77, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc, p 3; Submission 100, Marrickville Residents’ Action Group, p 3; Submission 36, Ms Anne Nolan, p 1; Submission 69, Ms Heather Davie, p 7.

## Will Metro Southwest improve network capacity?

- 2.72** There was contention during the inquiry over whether the conversion of the rail line between Sydenham and Bankstown would address key rail transport challenges and planning objectives.
- 2.73** As outlined in Chapter 1, the Metro City & Southwest project seeks to provide a transport system which can meet long-term demand and fulfill the NSW Government's broader planning objectives for Greater Sydney and the transport network. These objectives include supporting economic and population growth in Greater Sydney and a vision for a 30 minute metropolis of three cities.
- 2.74** The NSW Government maintained that Metro Southwest is 'integral in taking the pressure off the rest of Sydney's suburban rail system'. The project is purported to address critical network issues, including capacity constraints attributed to the Sydenham 'bottleneck' and congestion around the City Circle.<sup>126</sup>
- 2.75** The project also aims to provide capacity benefits, in addition to providing upgraded services and rail infrastructure for the ageing T3 Bankstown Line.<sup>127</sup>
- 2.76** This section will explore four key arguments which arose in this context—whether network congestion around the City Circle is better addressed by digital signaling, whether metro services can meet the capacity demands of the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor, whether the conversion is necessary to address the 'bottleneck' at Sydenham, and whether suburban rail travel will be impeded by Metro Southwest.

### Congestion and digital signaling

- 2.77** During the inquiry, the comparative network capacity benefits of Metro Southwest were assessed, particularly in the context of whether digital signaling upgrades would assist with congestion.
- 2.78** Several stakeholders contended that the most uplift in capacity for the network could be generated by upgrading to digital signaling rather than through the Metro Southwest conversion. For instance, Mr Roydon Ng, Co-Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line stated that 'signalling beats metro'.<sup>128</sup>
- 2.79** Mr Mathew Hounsell also advised the committee that for the network as a whole, 'digital signalling, in theory, could result in a 50 per cent uplift and certainly could do a 40 per cent, which would give us an extra 10 trains an hour through the City Circle'.<sup>129</sup>
- 2.80** Mr Hounsell also contended that changes to train stopping patterns as well as infrastructure improvements to CBD platforms could be made in order to further improve station capacity and movement of commuters through the City Circle.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 5.

<sup>127</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, pp 5 and 14.

<sup>128</sup> Evidence, Mr Ng, 6 November 2019, p 21. See also Evidence, Mr Wardrop, 7 November 2019, p 12.

<sup>129</sup> Evidence, Mr Hounsell, 7 November 2019, p 10.

<sup>130</sup> Evidence, Mr Hounsell, 7 November 2019, p 10.

- 2.81** Indeed, the NSW Government noted that signaling upgrades and improvement in infrastructure along the existing rail network will occur, alongside the Sydney Metro City & Southwest project. It stated that together these changes 'will increase the capacity of train services entering the Sydney CBD from about 120 an hour today to up to 200 services beyond 2024'.<sup>131</sup>
- 2.82** However, the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance contended that 'removing the line with the least patronage from the Sydney Rail network is also the least effective way of addressing the City Circle bottleneck'.<sup>132</sup>
- 2.83** Mr Peter Olive, Interim Convener, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, argued that of the 80 additional trains per hour the NSW Government expects to have capacity for through the Sydney CBD after 2024, only 10 could be attributed to Metro Southwest. In his view, Metro Southwest did not therefore offer 'the significant component' of the improvements to network capacity.<sup>133</sup>
- 2.84** Mr Howard Collins pointed out the additional benefits Metro City could provide in terms of Sydney CBD congestion:
- Everyone knows how busy Town Hall station is. We are getting additional stations on the metro, so with a quick 100 or 200 metre walk you will be at Pitt Street and have a choice of getting to Sydenham or somewhere else rather than squeezing onto the Town Hall line. Even with more signalling, the great choice of having more stations in the CBD is really good.<sup>134</sup>
- 2.85** Some stakeholders, however, drew the committee's attention to public comments made by Mr Collins in a media article, which suggested that a digital upgrade of the signalling system at a cost of about \$3 billion would be the 'biggest improvement we can make to the capacity of this city in a very short space of time'.<sup>135</sup>
- 2.86** In the article, Mr Collins is reported to have said that 'digital signalling would prove to be a "great return on relatively cheap investment", because it would boost the rail network's capacity by 30 to 40 per cent by allowing more frequent services'.<sup>136</sup>
- 2.87** When giving evidence to the committee, Mr Collins explained that these upgrades are not an alternative to the Metro Southwest project. He contended that signaling upgrades alone would not be sufficient to improve capacity of the network:

It is true that we are absolutely at the capacity of the timetable and the infrastructure we have today. We have a safe but traditional signalling system. Yes, we are, through a

<sup>131</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 5.

<sup>132</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 3.

<sup>133</sup> Evidence, Mr Olive, 6 November 2019, p 22.

<sup>134</sup> Evidence, Mr Collins, 7 November 2019, p 50.

<sup>135</sup> Matt O'Sullivan, 'Quickest, cheapest' way to boost Sydney's train services' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 March 2019, <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/quickest-cheapest-way-to-boost-sydney-s-train-services-20190305-p511y5.html>.

<sup>136</sup> Matt O'Sullivan, 'Quickest, cheapest' way to boost Sydney's train services' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 March 2019, <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/quickest-cheapest-way-to-boost-sydney-s-train-services-20190305-p511y5.html>.

whole series of More Trains, More Services program, enhancing that with greater capacity signalling but it cannot achieve the numbers of trains per hour with the current infrastructure, the stations we have and the complementary back-up and addition of Sydney Metro for the CBD.<sup>137</sup>

### **Capacity of the Bankstown line**

- 2.88** One specific point of contention during the inquiry was whether metro services would be able to meet the capacity demands of the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor following conversion.
- 2.89** The NSW Government stated that one of the key benefits of Metro Southwest is the high frequency of service, explaining: ‘Currently there are between four and 10 trains per hour in the peak. When Sydney Metro services start, there will be 15 new fully air-conditioned trains an hour in the peak and six trains per hour in the offpeak in each direction’.<sup>138</sup>
- 2.90** However, some stakeholders were concerned about these projections. Mr Peter Olive argued that a metro train every four minutes could not provide greater capacity than existing services, particularly at peak where current services run every five and nine minutes.<sup>139</sup>
- 2.91** Mr John Austen also explained to the committee that the number of trains per hour does not reflect the capacity of the line, as there is a disparity between the carrying load of metro to heavy rail. In his view, Metro Southwest needs to provide more services to compensate for the reduction in carrying load of each train.<sup>140</sup>
- 2.92** Mr Olive informed the committee that while the number of trains increases; ‘There is still a decrease by our calculations from 53,700 to 51,000’ passengers.<sup>141</sup>
- 2.93** In his evidence to the committee, Mr Jon Lamonte noted that metro can provide increased capacity in the future, through increased service frequency and by additional carriages. He stressed that Metro Southwest will provide a ‘lot more capacity options’.<sup>142</sup>

### **Sydenham track duplication**

- 2.94** One of the issues the Metro Southwest project was intended to address was the Sydenham ‘bottleneck’, where just north of Sydenham station six Sydney Trains track pairs merge into four track pairs, affecting the scheduling for all lines through Sydenham.
- 2.95** The NSW Government’s position is that conversion of the Bankstown line will result in significant improvement to train traffic through Sydenham:

The upgrade of the 124-year-old T3 Bankstown Line to metro rail is integral in taking the pressure off the rest of Sydney’s suburban rail system. Currently, this line creates a

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<sup>137</sup> Evidence, Mr Collins, 7 November 2019 p 56.

<sup>138</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 6.

<sup>139</sup> Evidence, Mr Olive, 6 November 2019, p 18.

<sup>140</sup> Submission 30, Mr John Austen, p 8.

<sup>141</sup> Evidence, Mr Olive, 6 November 2019, p 17.

<sup>142</sup> Evidence Mr Lamonte, 7 November 2019, p 54.

significant bottleneck for the existing rail network. It slows down the network where it merges with other railway lines close to the Sydney CBD ...<sup>143</sup>

- 2.96** However, some stakeholders strongly refuted the proposition that the ‘bottleneck’ is caused by the Bankstown line. Mr Geoffrey Williamson was one inquiry participant who questioned the characterisation of the issues at Sydenham, stating:

“The Bankstown bottleneck” argument ... is somewhat misleading as it seems to imply that the Bankstown line is the sole cause of the problem and that removal of this line may be the only way to solve it. There is a bottleneck but it is caused by the Bankstown line and other lines merging close to the CBD. Part of the problem was solved when the airport link was built...<sup>144</sup>

- 2.97** Mr John Austen similarly refuted that the bottleneck was caused by the Bankstown line, and suggested that a bypass could resolve any other issues:

For most relevant purposes, only two lines merge at Sydenham because the Airport and East Hills line runs through the airport rather than Sydenham. ... Hence, at Sydenham six tracks do not relevantly merge into four. ... There may be other reasons for issues at Sydenham but, if so, they do not arise from the simple claim of a bottleneck resulting from merger of six tracks into four. Were there a bottleneck at Sydenham, it could be mitigated by an additional track pair as a bypass.<sup>145</sup>

- 2.98** Mr Mathew Hounsell advised the committee that the issues through Sydenham were not ‘irresolvable’ and that a project for the amplification of this section of the network had already commenced but was abandoned, partially completed, in the 2008 global financial crisis.<sup>146</sup>

- 2.99** Some stakeholders, such as the Marrickville Residents’ Action Group, suggested that completing this project would be an alternative solution to conversion. The Group informed the committee:

There was a “Clearways Project” plan in 2005 for amplification of the lines from Sydenham to Central to six lines to ease the bottleneck into Central. Platforms have been built at St Peters & Erskineville. This project was supported by Premier Berejiklian when she was Opposition Transport Spokesperson, she said “The Clearways project is integral to the future public transport needs of Sydney” however in November 2008 after the Global Financial Crisis and Mini Budget this project was abandoned which was unfortunate as it may have offered better value for money with much less disruption.<sup>147</sup>

### **Suburban connectivity**

- 2.100** There were also concerns during the inquiry about the loss of suburban connections for commuters along the Bankstown line as a result of the planned conversion to metro.

<sup>143</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 5.

<sup>144</sup> Submission 48, Mr Geoffrey Williamson, p 2.

<sup>145</sup> Submission 30a, Mr John Austen, p 20.

<sup>146</sup> Evidence, Mr Hounsell, 7 November 2019, p 8. See also Submission 14, Mr Mathew Hounsell, p 8.

<sup>147</sup> Submission 100, Marrickville Residents’ Action Group, p 9.

**2.101** The committee heard that the current Sydney Trains network facilitates travel not only to the Sydney CBD, but also suburban travel. Mr Alex Wardrop explained the nature of travel on the Bankstown line:

The Bankstown Line is part of the much wider network of Sydney's metropolitan and interurban railways. It thus collects passengers from connecting lines and distributes them, either within its own bounds, or passes them onto the Sydney CBD. Furthermore, the Sydney CBD is not the only trip attractor for Sydney's rail passengers, although it is by far the largest...<sup>148</sup>

**2.102** Based on an analysis of historical travel statistics and 'passenger origin-to-destination movements obtained from the Opal fare system', Mr Wardrop contended that 'one-third of passengers flowing over the Bankstown Line towards the Sydney CBD' are from stations west of Bankstown and that twenty per cent of 'passengers got off trains somewhere on the Bankstown Line'.<sup>149</sup>

**2.103** Indeed, several inquiry participants noted the importance of providing efficient transport options between key suburban hubs.<sup>150</sup>

**2.104** Reflecting on the 'wider view of what the Bankstown line does for its community' Mr Wardrop questioned the 'break [of] these travel opportunities', as well as the loss of 'suburban connections' to 'Redfern, Lidcome/Olympic Park and Liverpool', which will result from conversion to metro.<sup>151</sup>

**2.105** Additionally, Mr Wardrop asserted that 'interposing gratuitous transfers will make travel between the Bankstown Line and adjacent CBDs, such as Olympic Park, Parramatta and Liverpool, less attractive...'.<sup>152</sup>

**2.106** The loss of direct access to key destinations and the impact of multi-modal travel on commuters were areas of concern for other inquiry participants. These issues are examined in Chapter 3.

## **Does conversion provide good value for money?**

**2.107** As outlined in Chapter 1, the construction of Metro City & Southwest is now anticipated to cost approximately \$15.5 billion. Concerns were put forward by some stakeholders that the cost of converting the line between Sydenham and Bankstown was not the best use of public money.

**2.108** A number of inquiry participants contended that the cost of conversion is a 'waste of public funds'.<sup>153</sup>

<sup>148</sup> Submission 27, Mr Alex Wardrop, p 2. See also Submission 44, Mr Grant Mistler, p 1.

<sup>149</sup> Submission 27, Mr Alex Wardrop, pp 3-4.

<sup>150</sup> For example, Submission 18, Mr Taufik Abidin, p 1; Submission 44, Mr Grant Mistler, p 1.

<sup>151</sup> Submission 27, Mr Alex Wardrop, pp 1 and 4.

<sup>152</sup> Submission 27, Mr Alex Wardrop, p 4.

<sup>153</sup> See Submission 6, Name suppressed, p 2; Submission 15, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 93, Name suppressed, p 5; Submission 58, Mr Stephen Longhurst, p 1; Submission 63, Mr Brian Hudson, p 2; Submission 70, Mr Kevin Moss, p 3; Submission 76, Ms Carolyn Smith, p 1; and Submission 79, The Battler, p 1.

**2.109** Several community groups shared this concern. The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance noted that while 'the precise cost' of conversion is unknown, estimates for the Metro Southwest project 'would presumably be over the \$1 billion mark'.<sup>154</sup> It argued that the expenditure was 'squandering the once-in-a-century windfall gains presented by the sale of the State's electricity assets'.<sup>155</sup>

**2.110** In a similar vein, the Hurlstone Park Association discussed community expectations regarding public funds, stating:

... funding is not infinite - public money must be carefully allocated and the community expects the government to prioritise spending based on need, and public good, (which includes widespread community acceptance and positive cost-benefit projections) not on ideological grounds or vested interests.<sup>156</sup>

**2.111** The Marrickville Residents' Action Group questioned the 'value' of replacing 'one railway line with another, while many under-serviced parts of Sydney are in dire need for new public transport'.<sup>157</sup>

**2.112** The committee heard that the Inner West Council shared community concerns that public funds were spent on an existing, rather than a new, rail corridor. Mr Ken Welsh, Team Lead Strategic Transport Planning, Inner West Council, stated:

... the main thrust of Council's concern was the expenditure of government resources on servicing an existing passenger catchment rather than putting in a system that could serve a passenger catchment that was lacking. For instance, either putting in a new service which provided better north-south connectivity or filling in some of the gaps in the existing network.<sup>158</sup>

**2.113** From a transport planning perspective, Mr Alex Wardrop similarly remarked that 'to build another railway just to take existing people is a huge waste of money. If you are going to build expensive new infrastructure, you really want a patronage payoff'.<sup>159</sup>

**2.114** Throughout the inquiry the committee received numerous suggestions relating to potential rail transport corridors in Greater Sydney instead of the Bankstown conversion. For example, Mr Mathew Hounsell argued:

Sydney needs low-cost expansions of our existing railway network to connect more places such as Victoria Road, Dee Why, Bonnyrigg and the north-south corridor between Strathfield and Hurstville. ... funds should be prioritised to enhance the existing infrastructure that we have and build a new western relief line. I do not believe that the Bankstown conversion is the highest priority at the moment.<sup>160</sup>

<sup>154</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 14.

<sup>155</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 16.

<sup>156</sup> Submission 38a, Hurlstone Park Association, pp 6-7.

<sup>157</sup> Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, pp 1 and 9. See also Submission 91a, EcoTransit Sydney, p 8; Evidence, Mr Olive, 6 November 2019, p 11.

<sup>158</sup> Evidence, Mr Welsh, 6 November 2019, p 2.

<sup>159</sup> Evidence, Mr Wardrop, 7 November 2019, p 9.

<sup>160</sup> Evidence, Mr Hounsell, 7 November 2019, p 3. See also Evidence, Mr Olive, 6 November 2019, p 11.

- 2.115** According to Mr Hounsell there were negative consequences for both taxpayers and the economy if infrastructure investment is not done ‘wisely’. He stated:

Every billion dollars the government spends on infrastructure, is a billion dollars we taxpayer must pay. NSW must target our investment and get the biggest bang for our buck. NSW must ensure our government invests wisely; such as in upgraded heavy rail signalling – a low-cost upgrade for a 50% capacity boost.

The state cannot afford more white elephants, they make doing business costlier and leave our city less competitive in a fierce global market. Every transport investment must deliver value for money by reducing operating costs and improving our competitive edge. If we fail to invest wisely, Sydney risks becoming internationally uncompetitive as talent and businesses leave for lower-cost, better connected and more liveable cities.<sup>161</sup>

- 2.116** Both the Hurlstone Park Association and Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance pointed to the ‘negative cost-benefit’ of the Newcastle light rail project and the city east light rail cost ‘blow out’, to explain why people are concerned about the cost of the Metro Southwest project and the government’s management of it.<sup>162</sup>
- 2.117** Consequently, given the anticipated costs of the project and the wide range of community concerns, including about whether it was the best option, some community groups suggested that the metro could terminate at Sydenham, including the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, Save Marrickville and the Marrickville Residents’ Action Group.<sup>163</sup>
- 2.118** Mr Hounsell also contended that ‘it is perfectly feasible to terminate the metro at Sydenham’ and spend project funds on alternative improvements to the Sydney Trains network.<sup>164</sup>

### **Private operation of the line**

- 2.119** Sydney Metro trains, systems, operations and maintenance is serviced through a public private partnership contract for Sydney Metro North West. During the inquiry it was announced that, in accordance with existing contract provisions, this public private partnership would be augmented to include Metro City & Southwest.
- 2.120** While some stakeholders did not express concerns about private operation of the rail line and recounted positive experiences of services on the Metro Northwest,<sup>165</sup> the privatisation of the operation of the line was an area of concern for other stakeholders.
- 2.121** The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance were concerned what impact this may have on fares and the Hurlstone Park Association raised other potential negative impacts of private operation,

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<sup>161</sup> Submission 14, Mr Mathew Hounsell, p 7.

<sup>162</sup> Submission 38a, Hurlstone Park Association, p 6; Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 7.

<sup>163</sup> Submission 38a, Hurlstone Park Association, p 9; Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 3; Submission 100, Marrickville Residents’ Action Group, p 3.

<sup>164</sup> Submission 14, Mr Mathew Hounsell, p 7.

<sup>165</sup> Evidence, Mr Brown, 6 November 2019, p 23.

including the focus on profit rather than service provision, reduced services and reliability, a lack of transparency and poor public value.<sup>166</sup>

**2.122** Several inquiry participants pointed to the private operation of bus services in Sydney and rail networks in Newcastle and Melbourne as examples where 'private operation has not worked'.<sup>167</sup>

**2.123** Mr Alex Wardrop argued there was an inherent issue with tendering services, stating that maintaining service quality is 'the continuing problem with franchise operations', and that 'because you have asked people to bid a price to deliver a service over a relatively long period, more often than not they struggle to deliver'.<sup>168</sup>

**2.124** Responding to these concerns, Mr Jon Lamonte explained the nature of the arrangements for service operation, including the service levels to be met:

We are working with Metro Trains Sydney, the operators of Northwest to make sure the service levels continue to improve. I just want to make it very clear that the metro service might be privately operated but the Sydney Metro infrastructure, like the stations, trains and railway, are owned by the New South Wales Government.<sup>169</sup>

**2.125** Mr Lamonte further explained that in the service contract, remuneration for Metro Northwest is based on the operator's performance against a range of key performance indicators:

[there are] ... a number of key performance indicators [KPIs]. We have had 12 million passenger journeys on it so far. They have run 55,000 services. They are running a very consistent form and headway, and they get paid a service payment based on that delivery.

... the same range of KPIs around cleanliness and headways will apply right through the line, through the city and out to Bankstown.<sup>170</sup>

**2.126** In addition, Mr Lamonte explained how fare setting works and where the revenue is directed:

... [public subsidy] is really a matter for how fares are set and what degree of the fare box comes back. The operators do not set fares. Their fares are set in exactly the same way as Sydney Trains. The level obviously is a matter for government to decide. The operator's contract—the way the contract is let is exactly the same way as on Northwest—is not based on patronage. They do not get the revenue; the revenue comes back to Transport for NSW.<sup>171</sup>

<sup>166</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 36; Submission 38a, Hurlstone Park Association, p 10.

<sup>167</sup> Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 3. See also Submission 38, Hurlstone Park Association, p 5; Submission 36, Ms Anne Nolan, p 3.

<sup>168</sup> Evidence, Mr Wardrop, 7 November 2019, p 9.

<sup>169</sup> Evidence, Mr Lamonte, 7 November 2019, p 50.

<sup>170</sup> Evidence, Mr Lamonte, 10 December 2019, p 18. See also Answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, 8 January 2020, p 6.

<sup>171</sup> Evidence, Mr Lamonte, 10 December 2019, p 18.

## Community consultation for Metro Southwest

- 2.127** The adequacy of community consultation processes was the subject of extensive discussion during the inquiry.
- 2.128** This section focuses on two key areas of concern, first: the nature and level of community consultation during the project's development, and consultation relating to temporary closure arrangements, and second: consultation relating to future rail services for stations on the T3 line west of Bankstown.

### The effectiveness of consultation processes

- 2.129** The NSW Government detailed the range of formal consultation activities and community information sessions undertaken with the community since June 2015.<sup>172</sup> It noted that this 'was not required by the planning process, but was carried out by Sydney Metro to proactively engage with the community'.<sup>173</sup>
- 2.130** In particular, the following consultation activities were outlined in relation to conversion of the line:
- community consultation in relation to the Environmental Impact Statement via online forums, community information sessions, distribution of a project update, information displays and flyers, customer focus groups and meetings with community groups
  - public exhibition of the Environmental Impact Statement and subsequently the Sydney Metro's response to submissions in the Submissions and Preferred Infrastructure Report for community comment
  - community consultation regarding the Submissions and Preferred Infrastructure Report, for example, via distribution of project newsletters and other information via email, newspaper advertisements, community information sessions, publication of a detailed Preferred Infrastructure Report Overview, and a dedicated hotline and email.<sup>174</sup>
- 2.131** Further, the NSW Government informed the committee that key changes to the project were made 'in response to feedback and further analysis of opportunities'.<sup>175</sup> In particular, existing station heritage and landscape features will be reused and retained and 'opportunities to integrate stations into the surrounding urban fabric' would be sought.<sup>176</sup> A wide range of other changes also occurred as a result of community consultation.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, pp 27-31.

<sup>173</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 28.

<sup>174</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, pp 27-29. See also Answers to supplementary questions, Transport for NSW, 6 December 2019, p 1.

<sup>175</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 29.

<sup>176</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 29.

<sup>177</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, pp 29-31.

- 2.132** Mr Jon Lamonte stated ‘there has been an enormous amount of consultation, including with businesses, to get to this point ... We have tried wherever we can to accommodate what people have told us’.<sup>178</sup>
- 2.133** Some stakeholders reflected positively on the consultation undertaken in relation to the project. Locals for Metro Southwest noted that ‘exhaustive community consultation’ has been undertaken, expressing their support in the resulting project changes ‘which will protect the character of our local stations and minimise closures’.<sup>179</sup> It saw these changes as evidence ‘that Sydney Metro consulted with and listened to the community’.<sup>180</sup>
- 2.134** Other community groups argued that more genuine consultation and co-operation should have been undertaken. The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance raised a range of concerns regarding the consultation undertaken by the NSW Government, including:
- timeframes for community consideration of large project documents were ‘less than adequate’
  - issues raised in submissions to either the Environmental Impact Statement or Preferred Infrastructure Report ‘have remained unanswered’
  - shopkeepers, commuters and residents surrounding stations were ‘poorly informed’ and provided ‘scant information’
  - information was unbalanced, focusing ‘on the potential advantages... but did not give adequate attention to the disadvantages’
  - ‘extra care’ to explain the ‘real impacts of the project’ to the diverse population of the corridor was not taken
  - information relating to the small business package has ‘not been communicated’
  - lack of consultation regarding temporary transport plans.<sup>181</sup>
- 2.135** In light of the concerns about consultation, the Hurlstone Park Association questioned how ‘meaningful’ community consultation had been, stating:
- A lot of the feedback regarding the metro was about unsatisfactory consultation. Although the government continually spruiked its consultative credentials, this did not translate to communities. Indeed, a lot of the communication was in the form of a one-way propaganda campaign rather than any meaningful exchange of information.<sup>182</sup>
- 2.136** The Marrickville Residents’ Action Group shared a similar view, stating ‘information sessions ... are not consultation. These sessions provided glossy marketing rather than substance and have been inadequate’.<sup>183</sup> They additionally raised concerns that the sessions simply presented

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<sup>178</sup> Evidence, Mr Lamonte, 7 November 2019, p 60.

<sup>179</sup> Submission 87, Locals for Metro Southwest, p 1.

<sup>180</sup> Submission 87, Locals for Metro Southwest, p 1.

<sup>181</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, pp 23-24 and 39. See also Submission 100, Marrickville Residents’ Action Group, pp 14-16; Submission 38, Hurlstone Park Association, pp 6-7; Submission 81, KOAS (Keep Our Area Suburban), pp 7-10.

<sup>182</sup> Submission 38, Hurlstone Park Association, p 6.

<sup>183</sup> Submission 100, Marrickville Residents’ Action Group, p 16.

the community with ‘pre-defined options, everything decided’ rather than an opportunity for ‘genuine sharing of ideas’.<sup>184</sup>

- 2.137** The Marrickville Residents’ Action Group also noted that despite the Temporary Transport Strategy document indicating community consultation would be sought regarding Temporary Transport Plans, ‘no dedicated public consultation’ has occurred.<sup>185</sup> The impact of temporary transport arrangements during construction will be covered in the next chapter.
- 2.138** Canterbury Bankstown Council also raised concerns about consultation. It remarked that ‘feedback received from the community is that they were not fully aware of what was to be delivered, the impacts on the stations or the improvements/changes to the centres’. Furthermore, it noted that ‘there still appears to be ongoing confusion within the community’ regarding a range of aspects of the project.<sup>186</sup>
- 2.139** Hurlstone Park Association recommended that ‘if the project proceeds, communities and community groups should be treated as stakeholders, and have input all through the planning and construction process’.<sup>187</sup>
- 2.140** Some stakeholders also felt that gaining access to information about the project has been difficult. Dr Marie Healy, Committee member, Hurlstone Park Association, commented:

Unfortunately, the Government has been so secretive about this project that we have had to get a lot of our information from the media. We heard from about previous rail executives speaking against some of the Government’s justifications. So it is very difficult for us to believe the Government when we hear so many counterarguments. The Government redacts all of its feedback and business cases. There has been so much secrecy that we are really distrustful of the justification. ... we really do not have the facts.<sup>188</sup>

- 2.141** Community groups detailed instances to the committee in which individual members had, in their view, faced unacceptable difficulties trying to access information from the NSW Government about the project, including via public access requests to government information (GIPAA).<sup>189</sup>
- 2.142** Due to this, Hurlstone Park Association were of the view that this lack of transparency has contributed to a ‘trust deficit’ within the community. The Association stated:

The NSW Government has created a huge trust deficit between itself and communities, due to issues relating to governance, conflicts of interest, lack of transparency, poor

<sup>184</sup> Submission 100, Marrickville Residents’ Action Group, p 16.

<sup>185</sup> Submission 100, Marrickville Residents’ Action Group, p 22.

<sup>186</sup> Submission 66, Canterbury Bankstown Council, p 3.

<sup>187</sup> Submission 38, Hurlstone Park Association, p 12. See also Submission 84, Save Marrickville, p 2.

<sup>188</sup> Evidence, Dr Marie Healy, Committee member, Hurlstone Park Association, 6 November 2019, p 50.

<sup>189</sup> Submission 102, Mr Roydon Ng, p 24; Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 40. See also Submission 100, Marrickville Residents’ Action Group, p 22; Evidence, Ms Coorey, 6 November 2019, p 56.

engagement with communities and multiple issues with other projects such as legal issues, delays and cost blow-outs.<sup>190</sup>

### Uncertainty for stations west of Bankstown

**2.143** As explained in Chapter 1, the nine T3 line stations west of Bankstown; Yagoona, Birrong, Regents Park, Berala, Sefton, Chester Hill, Leightonfield, Villawood and Carramar, will not be converted to metro. The lack of consultation or information relating to future services for these stations during the planning of Mero Southwest was a concern for several stakeholders.

**2.144** During inquiry hearings in late 2019, Mr Roydon Ng was critical of the delayed consideration of future T3 Bankstown Line services. Mr Ng stated:

It has been nearly five years since the Sydenham to Bankstown metro was announced, but the Government still does not provide any certainty ... especially for the nine stations west of Bankstown, about what is going to happen to train services.<sup>191</sup>

**2.145** Further, Mr Ng suggested that the lack of consultation and the lack of 'clarity of information' publicly available has created uncertainty and speculation over future services.<sup>192</sup>

**2.146** In response to community concerns and speculation over potential future services, Mr Howard Collins confirmed there were a number of 'heavy rail solution[s]' available for services west of Bankstown, but defended delaying their consideration.<sup>193</sup>

**2.147** Mr Collins argued it would not have been appropriate to consider future services earlier:

... if you have seen what we have been doing with the Sydney Trains network, I think as growth has been quite extreme—37 per cent over the last five years—and as parts of the city have flexed in terms of huge growth in stations, some doubling their size, we do have to have a flexible plan. I think it would have been wrong of us, when announcing Bankstown was going to be converted, to have said, "Right, this is the service we are putting on for the rest of the network."<sup>194</sup>

**2.148** Mr Collins further advised that 'over the next few months' Transport for NSW would look at service options and 'start the consultation process with Greater Sydney', a team within Transport for NSW.<sup>195</sup> Mr Collins detailed how community consultation on this point would occur in the future:

... there are now two organisations under Transport for NSW. One is Greater Sydney ... That team ... will be ensuring and improving the consultation not only with local community but with council, and ensuring that there is almost what I call a one-stop shop for ensuring that we in Sydney Trains do not turn up one week; RMS, as they used to, probably turn up the next week, and metro maybe the week after. ...

<sup>190</sup> See Submission 38a, Hurlstone Park Association, p 11; Evidence, Dr Healy, 6 November 2019, p 50.

<sup>191</sup> Evidence, Mr Ng, 6 November 2019, p 12.

<sup>192</sup> Evidence, Mr Ng, 6 November 2019, p 16.

<sup>193</sup> Evidence Mr Collins, 10 December 2019, p 13.

<sup>194</sup> Evidence Mr Collins, 10 December 2019, p 13.

<sup>195</sup> Evidence Mr Collins, 10 December 2019, p 13.

... part of that process being part of Greater Sydney in the future—ensuring that we do sit down, understand people's concerns about frequency and service and we do our best to ensure that those people west of that great metro service do understand what the real options are for them. We want to understand from the community whether they are best placed. ... But I think data, information, usage and future projected growth in these areas will help us guide the best service west of Bankstown.<sup>196</sup>

- 2.149** In answers to supplementary questions after the hearing, Transport for NSW stated it is 'finalising rail plans' for the T3 Bankstown Line, which will be 'publicly communicated at the appropriate time'.<sup>197</sup> Additionally, Transport NSW said that it 'will continue to review customer feedback through Opal data and customer insights to identify train service needs along the T3 Bankstown Line'.<sup>198</sup>
- 2.150** Relevant to this, in February 2020, subsequent to inquiry hearings, Transport for NSW released a preferred options paper for community consideration and feedback. The paper proposes differentiated Sydney Trains services for stations west of Bankstown.<sup>199</sup> These are discussed further in Chapter 3.

### Committee comment

- 2.151** The committee does not believe that the NSW Government has won community support for the Metro Southwest project. The case and rationale for conversion of the line to metro has not been adequately made out and has failed to convince affected communities of the purported benefits for the T3 line or the wider network.
- 2.152** In this regard, the committee notes that the full business case for the project has not been publicly released. This has made it difficult to assess the basis on which the NSW Government is proceeding with the project and to what extent community and stakeholders concerns are addressed.
- 2.153** In the committee's view, the case for proceeding with a conversion of the Sydenham to Bankstown line instead of a project that would take metro to areas that do not yet have access to rail services was not made out.
- 2.154** Although metro services have been welcomed in communities in Sydney that have previously not had access to heavy rail services, there was widespread agreement from witnesses that metro services are best used as a complement to, and not as a replacement of, the heavy rail network. The case for making an exception to this general principle when it comes to the Sydenham to Bankstown heavy rail line was not adequately established.
- 2.155** Further, the committee notes evidence that metro as a transport mode is not desirable for long-distance commutes and the use of metro for longer distances raises particular concerns regarding accessibility for commuters. These issues will be explored in the next chapter.

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<sup>196</sup> Evidence, Mr Collins, 10 December 2019, p 13.

<sup>197</sup> Answers to supplementary questions, Transport for NSW, 6 December 2019, p 11.

<sup>198</sup> Answers to supplementary questions, Transport for NSW, 6 December 2019, p 12.

<sup>199</sup> Transport for NSW, *Planning for rail services west of Bankstown station in 2024* (5 February 2020), <https://yoursay.transport.nsw.gov.au/west-of-Bankstown>.

- 2.156** The committee questions whether the NSW Government, in making the decision to convert the Sydenham to Bankstown line, has put undue weight on the purported benefits of privatisation to the short-term financial position of the government over and above the long-term interests of commuters in having affordable and accessible public transport across all areas of Greater Sydney.
- 2.157** Given concerns with the adequacy of the business case for this project, among questions about whether conversion is suitable for the T3 line and whether the purported benefits will be achieved, the committee recommends that the NSW Government immediately publish the full Sydney Metro City & Southwest final business case, including the final base-case financial model and cost benefit analysis for the Metro Southwest project.
- 2.158** It also recommends that for projects with private partners, the NSW Government ensure that it outlines more explicitly its assessment of the benefits of privatisation in comparison with a project which would result in the relevant public transport assets and services being held in public hands.

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**Recommendation 1**

That the NSW Government immediately publish the full Sydney Metro City & Southwest final business case, including the final financial model and benefit cost analysis for the Metro Southwest project.

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**Recommendation 2**

That the NSW Government ensure that any future projects with private partners outline more explicitly the benefits that the government foresees from privatisation in comparison with a project which would result in the relevant public transport assets and services being held in public hands.

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- 2.159** Reflecting on the significant issues raised during the inquiry concerning Metro Southwest, the committee is of the view that the conversion of the line between Sydenham and Bankstown is not value for money, and the projected benefits do not outweigh the expected disruption to local communities or damage to heritage and wildlife (these impacts are discussed in the next chapter).
- 2.160** Consequently, the committee recommends that the Metro Southwest project not proceed, leaving the Sydney Metro to terminate at Sydenham. The committee further recommends that project funds are instead spent on connecting new communities to rail services and improving existing rail services (for example, through digital signalling).

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**Recommendation 3**

That the NSW Government not proceed with the Metro Southwest project, leaving the Sydney Metro to terminate at Sydenham, and that project funds are instead spent on connecting new communities to rail services and improving existing rail services (for example, through digital signalling).

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- 2.161** In terms of community consultation for this project, the committee is concerned about the adequacy of community consultation and engagement methods and lack of access to information. Problems in this area have resulted in a level of uncertainty regarding the project and a lack of confidence in its purported benefits for communities along the corridor and the wider rail network.
- 2.162** In particular, the committee notes community concerns in relation to future services for stations west of Bankstown. The committee recognises that these issues have resulted in a significant lack of trust in the project by some stakeholders.
- 2.163** The committee recommends that government consultation processes be reviewed and a mandatory consultation strategy be introduced for government agencies which includes a requirement for genuine and meaningful community consultation.
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**Recommendation 4**

That the NSW Government review its consultation processes and develop and implement a mandatory consultation strategy which is focused on genuine and meaningful community consultation.

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## Chapter 3 The potential impacts of Metro Southwest

This chapter explores the potential impacts of Metro Southwest, particularly in terms of travel times, the need for commuters to shift between different forms of transport to reach their destinations, and the overall passenger experience.

The construction impacts associated with converting the line to metro, including the impact of station closures, is also discussed in this chapter. This is followed by looking at the potential planning and development implications along the corridor. Finally, the chapter outlines some key environmental concerns related to the project.

### Impact on travel

**3.1** This section explores the impact of Metro Southwest on travel times for current T3 Bankstown Line customers, as well as how priority destinations will be accessed following the shift to multi-modal transit (where a commuter has to switch between different forms of transport). It also explores how seating and crowding may impact the commuter experience.

#### Travel times

**3.2** The impact of metro on travel times was a key issue discussed throughout the inquiry. Travel time savings were one of the purported benefits of Metro City & Southwest.

**3.3** As shown in Figure 5 below, the NSW Government provided estimates on travel time savings between Metro Southwest stations and the new destinations which will be accessible on the Sydney Metro network.<sup>200</sup>

**Figure 5 Travel time savings for the Sydney Metro network**

	Central	Pitt St (new CBD station)	Barangaroo	Victoria Cross (North Sydney)	Chatswood	Macquarie University
	<b>Minutes saved, 'up to'</b> *					
<b>Bankstown</b>	6	15	25	15	25	25
<b>Campsie</b>	5	23	33	16	23	17
<b>Dulwich Hill</b>	4	12	22	31	22	26
<b>Marrickville</b>	4	12	22	17	22	22

\*including interchange and/or walk time

*Submission 71, NSW Government, p 22*

**3.4** During the inquiry, however, participants questioned whether metro services would result in faster or slower travel times for T3 Bankstown Line customers.

**3.5** For instance, some inquiry participants expressed concern that travel times to city stations currently accessible on the T3 Bankstown Line would increase due to the need to interchange.

<sup>200</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 22.

Mr Colin Schroeder, Co-convenor, EcoTransit Sydney, stated that for passengers travelling to existing City Circle stations 'their travel times will be increased'.<sup>201</sup>

- 3.6** Similarly, Mr Alex Wardrop, Railway Operations Researcher and Consultant, advised the committee that interchanges would particularly affect 'the one-third of passengers wishing to travel beyond Bankstown [who would] ... be faced with indeterminate transfer times between metro and suburban services'.<sup>202</sup>
- 3.7** The committee received detailed evidence relating to the anticipated impact of transfers on travel times for students attending the University of Sydney at Camperdown. Based on an impact study the University had commissioned, it stated that travel times for students currently using all-stops services are expected to increase by 'approximately 15 per cent' or 'an additional 17 minutes to Redfern if coming from Liverpool'.<sup>203</sup>
- 3.8** The University further noted that travel times for students currently using limited-stops services 'will increase by as much as 26 per cent each way' which 'is equivalent to almost one-third of the total course contact hours per semester per student'.<sup>204</sup>
- 3.9** A related issue discussed during the inquiry was the impact of dwell times at stations, the time for passengers to alight and board trains, and how these might potentially affect travel times.
- 3.10** Mr Howard Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Trains, informed the committee that the carriage design of single-deck metro trains facilitated improved dwell times compared to double-deck trains. Mr Collins explained that metro trains have 'three wide doors for every carriage which makes it easier and faster to get on or off [and] no internal stairs'.<sup>205</sup>
- 3.11** However, Mr Wardrop claimed that dwell times were currently affecting the efficiency of services on the Metro Northwest, stating:

Official Northwest Metro travel times are 14 minutes in each direction of travel, but July 2019 on-board observations suggest outturn travel times are more likely to be 14½ to 15 minutes. This is because station dwell times are widening to 40 seconds as a result of door opening and closing times exceeding 20 seconds.<sup>206</sup>

- 3.12** The committee also heard that due to the curved nature of platforms at stations along the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor a 'gap filler' would be required to ensure safe boarding onto metro services. The impact of gap fillers on achievable dwell times was a related point of discussion during the inquiry. Mr Colin Schroeder, Co-convenor, EcoTransit Sydney, explained:

...on the existing line from Sydenham to Bankstown most platforms are curved—you cannot get that close connection between the floor of the train and the platform edge.

<sup>201</sup> Evidence, Mr Colin Schroeder, Co-convenor, EcoTransit Sydney, 7 November 2019, p 20.

<sup>202</sup> Submission 27, Mr Alex Wardrop, p 7. See also Evidence, Mr Roydon Ng, Co-Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line, 6 November 2019, pp 11 and 20.

<sup>203</sup> Submission 57, The University of Sydney, p 6 and Answers to questions on notice, University of Sydney, 5 December 2019.

<sup>204</sup> Submission 57, The University of Sydney, p 6.

<sup>205</sup> Evidence, Mr Howard Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Trains, 7 November 2019, p 50.

<sup>206</sup> Submission 27, Mr Alex Wardrop, p 7. See also the discussion of crowding from paragraph 3.42.

... Mr Tim Parker ... introduced the idea of mechanical gap fillers. So when the train stops, as the doors on the platform are opening a gap filler goes to close that gap. The time that that gap filler will take—increasing dwell time—will depend on the furthest projection it will have to go.<sup>207</sup>

- 3.13** However, increased dwell times due to gap fillers was refuted by Mr Tim Parker, Executive Director, Projects, Sydney Metro, who advised the committee that gap fillers have been designed to work with train arrival and departure. Mr Parker explained 'the action of the doors opening and the slider coming out all happen in parallel so there is no increase in dwell time'.<sup>208</sup>

### **Multi-modal transit**

- 3.14** As discussed in Chapter 1, Metro City & Southwest will result in a variation to the stations directly accessible from the former T3 Bankstown line. Consequently, some rail journeys will become multi-modal, with commuters transferring between metro and heavy rail services via rail interchanges located at Bankstown, Sydenham and Central depending on their destination.
- 3.15** This section looks at the impact of Metro Southwest on accessing stations in the Sydney CBD, as well as access to the Camperdown precinct. The impact for stations west of Bankstown is also discussed.

### ***Accessing the Sydney CBD***

- 3.16** As discussed in Chapter 1, Metro City facilitates travel from Central to Chatswood via new Sydney CBD stations located at Pitt St, Martin Place and Barangaroo. After the T3 line is converted from heavy rail to metro, commuters will need to interchange at Sydenham or Central in order to access the Sydney Trains City Circle stations.
- 3.17** Some community groups were critical of the loss of direct access to stations along the Inner West and City Circle line. For Mr Peter Olive, Interim Convenor, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, the change in CBD access underpinned the view that Metro Southwest would not deliver the same level of service as currently exists with Sydney Trains, stating:

We see the Sydenham to Bankstown component of the metro as a reduction in services for our community. The primary reasons for that include a loss of direct access to eight current stations to the east of Sydenham on the Bankstown line, with particular concern for the direct loss of City Circle services, especially Town Hall, Wynyard and Circular Quay.<sup>209</sup>

- 3.18** Ms Heather Davie, Member, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, similarly raised concerns over the loss of direct access to Circular Quay and its impact on families and the elderly, stating: 'if you want to go to Circular Quay you can walk 800 metres from Martin Place. That is quite a

<sup>207</sup> Evidence, Mr Schroeder, 7 November 2019, p 28; Evidence, Ms Heather Davie, Member, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, 6 November 2019, p 53.

<sup>208</sup> Evidence, Mr Tim Parker, Executive Director, Projects, Sydney Metro, 7 November 2019, p 55.

<sup>209</sup> Evidence, Mr Peter Olive, Interim Convenor, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, 6 November 2019, p 11; Evidence, Ms Barbara Coorey, Convenor, Keep our Area Suburban, 6 November 2019, p 56; Submission 31, Mr Michael Summers, p 2; Submission 36, Ms Anne Nolan, p 1.

long walk. If you have got young children or you are elderly that is not going to be very comfortable'.<sup>210</sup>

- 3.19** Indeed, several individuals equally reflected negatively on the need to interchange in future. Mrs Debra Miniutti, commented:

I will have exchanged direct access for something less convenient and my travelling time to these places will be lengthened. I have attended information sessions and read the material available and there is nothing that convinces me that this conversion is an improvement for commuters along the T3 line.<sup>211</sup>

- 3.20** Conversely, the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue was critical of arguments concerning access to the City Circle, arguing that overall connectivity between destinations will be improved:

The Dialogue believes it is extremely disingenuous for this project's opponents to claim that Bankstown Line customers will somehow have a reduced level of service by not being directly linked to City Circle stations. Sydney Metro stations at Pitt Street, Martin Place and Barangaroo will provide identical or better access to CBD locations, as well as new direct connectivity to Sydney's Lower North Shore, precincts such as Macquarie Park and Macquarie University and the growing Hills District.<sup>212</sup>

- 3.21** However, the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance objected to Bankstown line commuters being forced to undertake multi-modal transit. They suggested that terminating the Sydney Metro at Sydenham would maintain the existing network and ensure the benefits of metro are accessible as an option for commuters. The Alliance stated:

... for residents living beyond Sydenham the effect of the Metro line, stopping at Sydenham would improve their access to other parts of Sydney. They would maintain their traditional services, most importantly to Redfern, Town Hall, Wynyard and Circular Quay, while being able to join the Metro at Sydenham and access the new City stations and the North Shore if they chose. Wider Sydney would have all the key features of a new Metro line – such as new North-West rail link, a new harbour crossing and new stops in the CBD – and access the Bankstown line as they always had.<sup>213</sup>

- 3.22** The added impact of multi-modal travel on commuters with limited ability was also noted. Ms Aisla Evans, commuter, expressed concerns over her ability to interchange, stating:

I want to be able to access Town Hall, Wynyard, Circular Quay and St James stations. I have a walking disability which makes it very hard to walk great distances. I do not have the time to be waiting around to access two or more transport systems to get to

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<sup>210</sup> Evidence, Ms Davie, 6 November 2019, p 53.

<sup>211</sup> Submission 45, Mrs Debra Miniutti, p 1. See also Submission 31, Mr Michael Summers, p 2; Submission 36, Ms Anne Nolan, p 1; Submission 48, Mr Geoffrey Williamson, p 4; Submission 63, Mr Brian Hudson, p 2; Submission 65, Professor Ian Tyrrell, p 1; Submission 70, Mr Kevin Moss, p 2; Submission 73, Ms Louise Dortins, p 2; Submission 74, Dr Safwat Riad, p 1.

<sup>212</sup> Submission 97, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 1.

<sup>213</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 19.

where I need to be. When at the present time I can get a train from Dulwich Hill station to any of the stops on the City Circle.<sup>214</sup>

- 3.23** In its submission, the NSW Government discussed the benefits of the new stations, and noted that interchanges are already a feature of Sydney's public transport network, stating:

... customers on the T3 Bankstown Line can continue to access the City Circle and Redfern by interchanging to Sydney Trains' services or taking the new metro to stations in close proximity. The Martin Place and Pitt Street metro stations will be just a short walk from St James and Museum stations. The new Waterloo metro station is near Redfern Station. Interchanging on a public transport network happens every day in Sydney – more than 30,000 people a day currently change trains at Central – and is standard in cities across the world.<sup>215</sup>

- 3.24** Additionally, Transport for NSW noted that commuters 'will no longer need to interchange for stations in Sydney's north and north-west' and that 'the new metro stations at Barangaroo will also link customers to the Barangaroo Ferry Hub'.<sup>216</sup>

***Services for stations west of Bankstown***

- 3.25** Another impact of Metro Southwest discussed during the inquiry was the potential loss of direct services to the Sydney CBD and Redfern for commuters from T3 Line stations west of Bankstown.

- 3.26** Mr Colin Schroeder, Co-convenor, EcoTransit Sydney, noted that the T3 Bankstown Line 'is not just Sydenham to Bankstown ... it is Sydenham through to Liverpool, Sydenham through to Lidcombe'. He asserted that Metro Southwest will 'disenfranchise people west of Bankstown'.<sup>217</sup>

- 3.27** The committee heard that following the cessation of T2 Inner West Line services in 2013, commuters from stations between Liverpool or Bankstown and Lidcombe had direct access to the Sydney CBD only via T3 Line services, which in future will be partially serviced by Metro Southwest.<sup>218</sup>

- 3.28** In evidence to the committee, Mr Roydon Ng, Co-Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line, reflected on the impact Metro City & Southwest will have for these commuters. Mr Ng said:

Now the nine stations west of Bankstown will lose the final direct train to the city, with Sydenham to Bankstown being downgraded into a metro ... Now 19,000 commuters every day from Berala, Regents Park, Sefton, Chester Hill, Leightonfield, Villawood, Carramar, Birrong, Yagoona will all face significantly increased travel times, having to interchange twice to reach the City Circle, Redfern, St Peters, Erskineville. The first

<sup>214</sup> Submission 54, Ms Aisla Evans, p 2. See also Submission 60, Mrs Margaret Fasan, p 1; Submission 73, Ms Louise Dortins, p 2.

<sup>215</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 5.

<sup>216</sup> Answers to supplementary questions, Transport for NSW, p 8.

<sup>217</sup> Evidence, Mr Schroeder, 7 November 2019, p 18.

<sup>218</sup> Evidence, Mr Ng, 6 November 2019, p 12.

interchange is at Bankstown and then another interchange at either Sydenham or Central.<sup>219</sup>

- 3.29** Mr Ng added that should commuters wish to travel to the Sydney CBD on Sydney Trains services via Lidcombe, rather than via Bankstown and Metro Southwest, they could similarly be faced with multiple interchanges. Mr Ng stated:

For the commuters at Sefton, Chester Hill, Villawood, Leightonfield and Carramar to get to Lidcombe also requires changing at Birrong. For example, to go from Chester Hill to Circular Quay you would either go Chester Hill to Birrong, change trains; from Birrong to Lidcombe, change trains; from Lidcombe to Circular Quay, that is three trains on what used to be one direct train on the Inner West line Liverpool via Regents Park service. ... So, again: one direct train now from west of Bankstown will become three separate trains once Metro Southwest comes in.<sup>220</sup>

- 3.30** Mr Ng and Mr Olive both contended that the requirement to interchange or use multi-modal transit would make the travel experience 'much worse' for commuters. Mr Ng argued that this would 'mean that public transport is a less attractive option'.<sup>221</sup>

- 3.31** To address the service concerns for stations west of Bankstown, some stakeholders called for the restoration of Sydney Trains services between the City and Liverpool or Bankstown via Regents Park on the former T2 Inner West Line.<sup>222</sup>

- 3.32** In response to questions regarding the feasibility of this, Mr Ng noted that other services have been, or will be, utilising all or part of the route. Mr Ng explained:

... if you look at the current Sydney trains map the T2 Inner West line goes all the way to Parramatta. The Inner West Liverpool via Regents Park was taken out in 2013 and stopped at Homebush. The reason was that supposedly there was not enough space between Homebush and Lidcombe. No additional tracks have been put in since 2013 or 2017 but ... the Inner West Line T2 now is able to go from Homebush all the way to Parramatta through Lidcombe, so there is no lack of track capacity. I should also refer to the Temporary Transport Plan for this Bankstown line shutdown. The direct train on T3 is operating from Central to Campsie through Lidcombe, Regents Park, Bankstown, so it is turning left at Lidcombe.<sup>223</sup>

- 3.33** On this matter, regarding future services for stations west of Bankstown, Mr Howard Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Trains, assured the committee that Sydney Trains intend to provide a city service:

We are looking certainly at a number of options for those stations west of Bankstown. It is a very complicated and historic railway with railway triangles and branches and services to and from Lidcombe to Bankstown as well as Liverpool. We are really working hard with Transport for NSW.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> Evidence, Mr Ng, 6 November 2019, pp 11-12.

<sup>220</sup> Evidence, Mr Ng, 6 November 2019, p 16.

<sup>221</sup> Evidence, Mr Ng, 6 November 2019, p 21; Evidence, Mr Olive, 6 November 2019, p 21.

<sup>222</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 4; Evidence, Mr Ng, 6 November 2019, p 12.

<sup>223</sup> Evidence, Mr Ng, 6 November 2019, p 17.

<sup>224</sup> Evidence, Mr Collins, 7 November 2019, p 53.

- 3.34** Mr Collins provided further assurances that Sydney Trains are 'not going to leave people behind and marooned on those stations that are west of Bankstown'.<sup>225</sup> Mr Collins referred the committee to previous service configurations as examples of potential future rail services.<sup>226</sup> He also reiterated the benefits of Metro Southwest for stations west of Bankstown:

... I think at the end of the day, once the metro opens, there are really two great viable options which will make them better off. One is making that very short level platform connection to get on the metro to get into places they have never got before. The second one is we are really considering what those options could be to give these people service provision into the city from those remaining stations.<sup>227</sup>

- 3.35** Relevant to this, in February 2020, Transport for NSW publicly proposed three Sydney Trains service options for stations west of Bankstown for consideration and feedback. The preferred option was for a Sydney Trains service between Liverpool and the City via Regents Park. It also proposed that Birrong and Yagoona stations be serviced by a shuttle operating between Lidcombe and Bankstown, with the shuttle also providing an interchange opportunity at Regents Park.<sup>228</sup>

#### *Access to the Camperdown precinct*

- 3.36** Unlike the direct access offered by the T3 Bankstown Line, Metro City & Southwest requires an interchange at Sydenham in order to alight at Redfern. A particular concern raised with the committee was the travel impact that multi-modal transit would have on students who utilise T3 Bankstown Line services in order to attend the University of Sydney.
- 3.37** As discussed at paragraph 3.7, the University of Sydney argued that travel times for students will increase between 15 and 26 per cent.<sup>229</sup> The University also advised the committee that there were 2,077 students living within 1 kilometre of T3 Bankstown Line stations west of Sydenham, with more students residing within 2 kilometres of stations scheduled for conversion.<sup>230</sup>
- 3.38** At a hearing the broader implications of this for students and the University were discussed. Mr Gregory Robinson, Director, Campus Infrastructure and Services, University of Sydney, stated that the 'inconvenience' of longer travel times and multi-modal travel 'starts to mount up in terms of ... balancing between work life, student life and the movement to and from those activities'.<sup>231</sup>
- 3.39** Mr Robinson further noted that should students choose to enrol in other universities because of travel difficulties, the University could be faced with an 'equity issue'. Mr Robinson commented:

<sup>225</sup> Evidence, Mr Collins, 10 December 2019 p 12.

<sup>226</sup> Evidence, Mr Collins, 10 December 2019 p 12.

<sup>227</sup> Evidence, Mr Collins, 7 November 2019, p 53.

<sup>228</sup> Transport for NSW, *Planning for rail services west of Bankstown station in 2024*, p 4, <https://yoursay.transport.nsw.gov.au/west-of-Bankstown> (accessed 3 March 2020).

<sup>229</sup> Submission 57, The University of Sydney, p 6.

<sup>230</sup> Submission 57, The University of Sydney, p 4.

<sup>231</sup> Evidence, Mr Gregory Robinson, Director, Campus Infrastructure and Services, University of Sydney, 6 November 2019, p 37; Evidence, Mr Olive, 6 November 2019, p 11.

We pride ourselves on being the university for Sydney. We pride ourselves on the fact that anyone who is in the metropolitan area of Sydney can have access to our university. We enjoy the diversity that we get from being so accessible. ...

It is an equity issue. ... If there are constraints in terms of the ways in which the students can access the university, that would probably bias where we would put scholarship money and where we would try to close that gap.<sup>232</sup>

- 3.40** The committee heard that while work is being undertaken to improve transport connections to the precinct, there is strong local support for a transport plan which includes a rail service.<sup>233</sup>
- 3.41** The University of Sydney strongly advocated for a Camperdown rail station as part of the proposed Metro West. It argued this would alleviate the 'significant transport constraints' experienced by the precinct, including congestion on local roads and at Redfern station, the 'last mile' transport gap between Redfern station and the precinct, and 'build-in capacity' for known future growth.<sup>234</sup>

### **Commuter experience**

- 3.42** Seating and potential overcrowding on Metro services was also discussed during the inquiry. Mr Wardrop explained that there was less seating on Sydney Metro when compared to Sydney Trains:

Current 8-car double deck suburban trains offer peak period travellers a high density of seating and standing room, because they have 50% more floor area than equivalent single deck trains. Accordingly, they have a very effective suburban carriage design, which combines a high level of seating for passengers travelling throughout the day and a substantial overload standing capacity for peak period travellers. ...

Metro trains are currently 30 metres, or so, shorter than suburban trains. Metro trains offer barely 40% of the seating offered by suburban trains so that even at current Bankstown Line morning peak period patronage, only an average of 45% of passengers would be seated. During the morning peak hour, only an average of 35% of passengers would be seated, almost at maximum loadings throughout the whole of the peak hour. Why should 65% of Bankstown Line passengers be forced to stand when only 16% of passengers currently do so?<sup>235</sup>

- 3.43** Other inquiry participants also noted the number of seats this represented. For example, Mr Olive, from the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, stated that seating 'will be reduced from the current number of 895 ... to 378 per train'.<sup>236</sup> Further, Mr John Austen, a retired transport economist, assessed that 10 heavy train services an hour would provide 26,400 seats in a three

<sup>232</sup> Evidence, Mr Robinson, 6 November 2019, p 43.

<sup>233</sup> Evidence, Mr Robinson, 6 November 2019, p 37; Evidence, Mr Ken Welsh, Team Lead Strategic Transport Planning, Inner West Council, 6 November 2019, p 6.

<sup>234</sup> Submission 57, The University of Sydney, pp 3 and 8-9; Evidence, Mr Robinson, 6 November 2019, p 38.

<sup>235</sup> Submission 27, Mr Alex Wardrop, Railway Operations Researcher and Consultant, pp 4-5. See also Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 22.

<sup>236</sup> Evidence, Mr Olive, 6 November 2019, p 11. See also Evidence, Dr Marie Healy, Committee member, Hurlstone Park Association, 6 November 2019, p 49.

hour window, whereas 15 metro services per hour would provide 17,000 seats in a three hour window, an overall reduction of 9,400 seats in a three hour window.<sup>237</sup>

- 3.44** As noted in Chapter 2, some stakeholders questioned the appropriateness of reduced seating for long distances. The need to stand, and the impact this would have on the commuting experience, was also discussed throughout the inquiry. For example, Ms Heather Davie, Member, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, commented that the lack of seating will detrimentally affect certain demographic groups who utilise public transport. She stated:

Could I just talk about comfort as a passenger? ...When the Metro is complete I will be at least 74. I am a very good user of public transport. I am very, very concerned about the seating arrangements. We are going to go from 70 per cent seating and 30 per cent standing to the reverse. I can only just reach the handle on the Metro, so standing long distances would be very difficult—not just for me but for other elderly people, for children, for mothers with young children with bags and babies. I see that as a big concern.<sup>238</sup>

- 3.45** Ms Davie further noted that the lack of seating would limit opportunities to maximise travel time, stating: 'I do see people using their computers, studying and reading their books on the train. I see a lot of work being done on the train. That is not going to be possible if you are hanging on'.<sup>239</sup>

- 3.46** Mr Austen suggested this was an important issue, and that seating considerations should be a 'criterion in public transport'. Mr Austen commented that:

... metro makes it more difficult for westies to participate in the best opportunities Sydney has to offer. It lacks the seats they need. ... On metro's hypothetical peak capacity, 75 per cent more people would be standing. Actually, they would not be standing; they would drive or stay home.<sup>240</sup>

- 3.47** In this regard, the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance argued that lack of seating and crowding were a known project 'dis-benefit', stating:

Even the government's own business case acknowledges the lack of seating will have a negative impact on Metro commuters. It states: "Customers travelling on metro services are expected to experience some crowding dis-benefit as trains will be configured to accommodate a higher ratio of standing to seated passengers."<sup>241</sup>

- 3.48** While noting that crowding levels were a 'contentious issue', Mr Wardrop expressed the view that the claimed capacity of metro would result in crowding levels that exceeded what he considered to be appropriate. He explained:

... It is thus suggested that Level of Service E, at four persons per square metre, be taken as the practical limit on how crowded a peak hour train should be throughout its

<sup>237</sup> Submission 30, Mr John Austen, p 21.

<sup>238</sup> Evidence, Ms Davie, 6 November 2019, p 53. See also Submission 37, Dr Marie Healy, p 5; Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 21.

<sup>239</sup> Evidence, Ms Davie, 6 November 2019, p 53.

<sup>240</sup> Evidence, Mr John Austen, Transport Economist, retired, 7 November 2019, pp 2 and 14, Submission 30, Mr John Austen, p 10.

<sup>241</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 21.

length. This level of crowding would leave some space for passengers to filter through when entering or exiting a train.

... It should be noted that [Transport for NSW] TfNSW has claimed a capacity of 1200 passengers in a metro train, which is approaching lift-like crowding [Level of Service F (five persons per square metre)]. This raises questions as to how metro station stops might be managed when passengers have difficulty filtering through on-board crowds.<sup>242</sup>

- 3.49** From a commuter's perspective, Ms Davie commented that high levels of crowding were not 'pleasant' commuting, and that this may discourage patronage:

The documents say that the Metro is customer focused, but it has not considered the ageing population and the extended families that use the Sydenham to Bankstown line on a Sunday. The train is full of prams, grandma, grandpa—everybody going for their day out. ... It is not going to be such a comfortable trip. With the capacity levels quoted, they talk about increasing the capacity, but they are crush levels. They are the Tokyo crush levels, where you need the people to push you onto the train. Body-to-body commuting is not pleasant. I can see that that will put a lot of people off travelling on the train if they have got to travel a long way while standing up in very close proximity to someone else's body.<sup>243</sup>

- 3.50** Ms Davie also raised concerns that carriage crowding would also impact travel time savings. Ms Davie argued that 'there will be longer wait times for some people', if they 'are not able to board the train due to overcrowding'.<sup>244</sup>

## Construction impacts

- 3.51** Local disruption and temporary transport arrangements during construction of the Metro Southwest were also discussed throughout the inquiry. In particular, stakeholders discussed the impact of station closures and potential impact of construction on businesses along the corridor. This section will outline stakeholder views on these issues.

### Local disruption

- 3.52** For some stakeholders the disruption caused by construction will be an inconvenience, although necessary to deliver improvements to rail services and new infrastructure. One inquiry participant remarked: 'No pain, no gain. Everything involves some sacrifice but the outcome—is it worth it? I think it is'.<sup>245</sup>
- 3.53** For others, the scale of disruption, as well as the duration of station closures, were significant factors which contributed to their opposition to the project. For example, the Inner West Council drew the committee's attention to a 2017 resolution which stated, in part, that 'our

<sup>242</sup> Submission 27, Mr Alex Wardrop, p 6.

<sup>243</sup> Evidence, Ms Davie, 6 November 2019, p 53.

<sup>244</sup> Evidence, Ms Davie, 6 November 2019, p 53; Submission 69, Ms Heather Davie, p 4.

<sup>245</sup> Evidence, Dr Robert Czernkowski, Member, Locals for Metro Southwest, 6 November 2019, p 35. See also Submission 97, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 1; Submission 42, Name Suppressed, p 2.

community is not prepared to accept the disruption that would be caused by this project, that we are not convinced will benefit our community or Sydney as a whole'.<sup>246</sup>

- 3.54** The negative impact of increased road traffic for local communities during construction and rail closure periods was a particular area of concern discussed by inquiry participants.<sup>247</sup> For example, Mrs Margaret Fasan, community member, expressed the view that 'the already congested Canterbury Rd ... will be rendered almost impassable for many months'.<sup>248</sup>
- 3.55** The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance drew the committee's attention to the traffic impact analysis in the project's Environmental Impact Statement. This acknowledged the likely increased traffic due to construction and station closures and then from urban renewal, which would increase congestion, limit access, and 'could also affect people's ability to carry out their usual networking and social activities, impacting on community cohesion'.<sup>249</sup>
- 3.56** Inner West Council similarly expressed concerns regarding the impact of increased traffic during construction. Mr Ken Welsh, Team Lead Strategic Transport Planning, Inner West Council, commented that the Inner West is 'copping it from all directions' with residents particularly in Marrickville, Sydenham, Tempe and Dulwich Hill, 'suffering from the cumulative impact' of multiple construction projects.<sup>250</sup>
- 3.57** On this point, the NSW Government and Sydney Metro acknowledged the project would result in disruption. Mr Jon Lamonte, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Metro, discussed the closures and temporary transport arrangements with the committee and stated: 'we are very conscious that construction work will have an impact'.<sup>251</sup>

### Temporary Transport Plans

- 3.58** During construction closure periods Temporary Transport Plans will be in place, in order to provide alternative public transport options for customers.
- 3.59** Mr Ken Welsh, Team Lead Strategic Transport Planning, Inner West Council, highlighted the complexity of the temporary transport arrangements with the committee, stating:

We are in the process of working with metro on those temporary transport arrangements. We have looked at the impending ones that will happen this Christmas [December 2019]. There is a massive amount of bus movement that will be happening. Sydenham station in particular will be a very critical point to manage. ...

<sup>246</sup> Submission 62, Inner West Council, p 1. See also Submission 69, Ms Heather Davie, p 1; Submission 81, KOAS (Keep Our Area Suburban), p 9; Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 2.

<sup>247</sup> See Submission 37, Ms Marie Healy, p 8; Submission 39, Mr Tony Rodi, p 1; Submission 73, Ms Louise Dortins, p 2; Submission 83, Australian Rail Tram and Bus Industry Union, NSW Branch, p 2; Submission 84, Save Marrickville, p 2; Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, pp 8 and 12; Submission 93, Name suppressed, p 5; Submission 102, Mr Roydon Ng, pp 29-30.

<sup>248</sup> Submission 60, Mrs Margaret Fasan, p 3.

<sup>249</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 8.

<sup>250</sup> Evidence, Mr Welsh, 6 November 2019, p 2.

<sup>251</sup> Evidence, Mr Jon Lamonte, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Metro, 10 December 2019, p 3.

With the temporary transport arrangements it is not like we are just replacing a train with a bus that stops at every station. There are going to be some buses that have to be express buses. ... there will be possession periods where the Illawarra line...may not be able to get through for certain periods of time. It is a very complex arrangement ...<sup>252</sup>

**3.60** Some stakeholders expressed concern over the scale of the temporary arrangements and the impact they will have on local disruption. For example, Ms Barbara Coorey, Convenor, Keep our Area Suburban, noted that '21 million users tap on and off between Sydenham and Bankstown every year; in peak ... 100,000 people tap on and off between Bankstown and Sydenham' and asked 'How are you going to put 100,000 people on buses?'.<sup>253</sup>

**3.61** Other community members expressed the view that the proposed temporary transport strategy is inadequate and will result in local traffic disruption. Mrs Margaret Fasan, stated:

The temporary transport strategy set out in the [Environmental Impact Statement] EIS is insufficient and will cause delays and stress to the 100,000 commuters who travel the corridor each day during the construction period. The EIS notes that the estimated 101 extra buses per hour required will not be feasible as they would cause traffic congestion through Marrickville and Sydenham.<sup>254</sup>

**3.62** Ms Heather Davie, Member, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, similarly commented on the impact closures would have on the lives of commuters, stating:

Alternative transport arrangements during possession periods will have a major impact on commuters and their families. These include loss of kiss & ride, potential loss of dedicated & informal commuter parking areas, road closures and road network changes, leaving earlier, getting home later, with longer journeys needing to be planned for and family routines changed over long periods of time adding to the stresses of daily life.<sup>255</sup>

**3.63** During the inquiry, Transport NSW representatives highlighted the temporary transport arrangements implemented for Metro Northwest, in order to illustrate the experience which could be expected during Metro Southwest.<sup>256</sup>

**3.64** However, some inquiry participants questioned this comparison, particularly with regard to the accessibility of temporary bus services. For example, the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, stated:

The replacement buses for the Bankstown Line shutdown also appear to be inferior to the brand new "StationLink" buses used to replace trains between Epping and Chatswood during the construction of Sydney Metro Northwest.

Every "StationLink" bus running between Epping and Chatswood was an accessible service and it is appalling to see South West Sydney being treated as second-class citizens.

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<sup>252</sup> Evidence, Mr Welsh, 6 November 2019, p 4.

<sup>253</sup> Evidence, Ms Coorey, 6 November 2019, p 57.

<sup>254</sup> Submission 60, Mrs Margaret Fasan, p 4.

<sup>255</sup> Submission 69, Ms Heather Davie, p 21.

<sup>256</sup> Evidence, Ms Marg Prendergast, Coordinator General, Transport for NSW, 7 November 2019, p 57.

Suburban bus stop locations outside or nearby to train stations are also not suited for large crowds on the narrow footpath, which adds difficulty to the travelling experience for persons with a disability.<sup>257</sup>

**3.65** The committee also heard that residents recently experienced closures on the Western Line. Mr Welsh reflected on this recent experience and commented on the approach Sydney Metro were taking for Metro Southwest, stating:

... I think Metro are putting a lot of time and energy into getting it right. ... Part of the reason I have concerns is some of the possession periods that happened on the Western Line ... presented a lot of issues ... Newtown station was being bypassed, for instance, and you would get off at Redfern station and there were a fleet of about eight buses there and you had to find which bus you were going to catch.

We had a lot of concern from residents that they just had no idea what was happening. I think Metro have learnt a lot from that.<sup>258</sup>

**3.66** On this issue, representatives of Transport for NSW expressed their commitment to minimising disruption. For example, Mr Howard Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Trains stated:

...[regarding] the disruption for customers, Mr Lamonte and the team have worked pretty hard on understanding when the line is going to be closed. We are going to operate that line right up to a time to very quickly hand over to metro. It is not as if there is five years of complete chaos where people have to travel on buses. We will provide a great bus alternative for the shortest time.<sup>259</sup>

**3.67** In its submission, the NSW Government also explained that following consultation and project review, closures have been scheduled to occur in coordination with 'regular weekend track work' and over two weeks during the Christmas holiday period each year, rather than 'during school holidays and peak times'.<sup>260</sup> Additionally, it was noted the schedule of closures 'has been developed to reflect customer demand and travel needs' and designed to minimise the impact to customers.<sup>261</sup>

**3.68** The NSW Government further indicated that community information programs, network monitoring and additional customer support would be utilised to manage the temporary transport services. To ensure temporary transport services run smoothly, bus marshals, street teams, station signage, precinct managers, CCTV network monitoring, and special new year's eve arrangements would also be in place.<sup>262</sup>

<sup>257</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, pp 43-44.

<sup>258</sup> Evidence, Mr Welsh, 6 November 2019, p 7.

<sup>259</sup> Evidence, Mr Collins, 7 November 2019, p 52.

<sup>260</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, pp 24 and 29 and Evidence, Mr Lamonte, 7 November 2019, p 51. See also Evidence, Dr Czernkowski, 6 November 2019, p 35.

<sup>261</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 24.

<sup>262</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 26.

### Managing mode shift

- 3.69** The committee heard that construction closures had the potential to shift public transport users to both short and long term private transport use.
- 3.70** The importance of well managed Temporary Transport Plans was discussed with the committee by Mr Ken Welsh, Team Lead Strategic Transport Planning, Inner West Council, who held the view that if arrangements were 'not very clean, very legible, very predictable people will get in their cars'.<sup>263</sup> Mr Welsh further explained his concerns relating to this potential 'mode shift':

I do have concerns over the longer possession period, ... even if you get the wayfinding right and the information right, we still may have people divert back to using their private cars. It is the convenience: A train carrying, say, 3,000 to 5,000 people versus a fleet of buses—you cannot be sure you are going to get a seat on the first bus. ...

... Once you have got people who have moved into their private transport, ... it is really hard to get them back into public transport. We see the critical thing is how the temporary transport is managed and then ... if they have moved to cars ... getting that mode shift back to public transport.<sup>264</sup>

- 3.71** Indeed, the committee heard differing views on the appeal of metro for commuters given the likely disruption. Mr Wes Brown, member, Locals for Metro Southwest, expressed the view that commuters 'will happily upgrade' to future metro services.<sup>265</sup> Other submission authors expressed the view that some people would opt for private transport and continue to drive after conversion.<sup>266</sup>
- 3.72** In response to these concerns, and broader concerns regarding the temporary transport arrangements for Metro Southwest, Ms Marg Prendergast, Coordinator General, Transport for NSW, drew the committee's attention to the experience of the Metro NorthWest conversion:

... We know that traffic got busy. Some people did convert. ... But in essence we have come back with metro introduced, post that bus operation, and what I can tell you is that traffic has reduced and the congestion at Macquarie Park. It is a combination of metro, the improved bus services—everyday bus services, not our special ones—plus the work we did at signals et cetera. Resoundingly we hear from the businesses at Macquarie Park that, post station link, there is less traffic on the road. Obviously we are seeing 75,000 people travelling on Sydney Metro Northwest. So it has actually reduced traffic.<sup>267</sup>

### Impact on businesses

- 3.73** The potential impacts of Metro Southwest on businesses during the construction phase were also explored during the inquiry.

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<sup>263</sup> Evidence, Mr Welsh, 6 November 2019, p 4.

<sup>264</sup> Evidence, Mr Welsh, 6 November 2019, pp 2 and 7.

<sup>265</sup> Evidence, Mr Wes Brown, Member, Locals for Metro Southwest, 6 November 2019, p 23.

<sup>266</sup> Submission 30a, Mr John Austen, p 37; Submission 68, Mr John Rotherham, p 1.

<sup>267</sup> Evidence, Ms Prendergast, 7 November 2019, p 57.

- 3.74** Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce did not anticipate a negative impact from Metro Southwest. Drawing attention to the Metro Northwest project, it remarked:

Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce understands from our business colleagues at Macquarie Park and North Ryde that the temporary transport arrangements for the seven-month closure of the Epping to Chatswood line in 2018-19 resulted in minimal disruption. Apart from minor and temporary inconvenience, we are not aware of any negative impact on businesses, for example through reduced visitation by customers, or additional expenses for the business or employees.<sup>268</sup>

- 3.75** Inner West Council had a different view regarding the potential impact on businesses. It contended that while construction activities may potentially increase trade, these are offset by local disruption, which will cause regular customers to shop elsewhere, resulting in an 'overall negative impact on trading levels'.<sup>269</sup>

- 3.76** Mr Tim Parker, Executive Director, Projects, Sydney Metro, indicated to the committee that Transport for NSW did not expect businesses to be significantly affected during closures, stating:

I think the answer is one of the feedbacks from the [Environmental Impact Statement] EIS was actually reducing the amount of closures. As I said, again, as far as footfall goes and things like that, that is where the buses will be, so people will still be there, and so we do not believe there will be a material economic loss.<sup>270</sup>

- 3.77** Mr Jason Arraj, Board Member, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, also noted the collaborative approach undertaken to date regarding the impact of construction on business, and was optimistic that, if continued, the approach would ease the transition to metro. He stated:

I think more importantly when it comes to the construction phase that the consultative nature of the arrangement between council, government and businesses is ongoing. If we have that continued collaboration, those continued meetings to understand what is going on, everybody is in sync and on the same page, then I think that transitional process would be a lot easier. It is when you do not talk and communicate that people get nervous and businesses start to worry.<sup>271</sup>

- 3.78** However, some stakeholders expressed concern that local businesses had not been adequately consulted, particularly in regard to the Small Business Owners Support Program. Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance stated:

... [the program has] not been communicated to the shopkeepers and or landowners who will be directly impacted by the effects of construction of the conversion of the T3 line from heavy rail to Metro. No information exists in relation to any compensation

<sup>268</sup> Submission 51, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, p 2.

<sup>269</sup> Submission 62, Inner West Council, Appendix 1, p xxi.

<sup>270</sup> Evidence, Mr Parker, 7 November 2019, p 58.

<sup>271</sup> Evidence, Mr Jason Arraj, Board Member, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, 6 November 2019, p 36.

package. There is no information on the terms of funding, guidelines and the responsible authority.<sup>272</sup>

- 3.79** Inner West Council similarly stated 'more detail is required around the nature and extent of support referred to under the Small Business Owners Support Program'.<sup>273</sup>
- 3.80** A further issue discussed during the inquiry was the possibility of businesses suffering significant negative impacts, as experienced by local businesses during construction of the CBD and South East Light Rail.<sup>274</sup>
- 3.81** Ms Marg Prendergast, Coordinator General, Transport for NSW, acknowledged that Transport for NSW had 'learned from' the light rail project but emphasised that the metro conversion was 'a totally different build'. During the hearing, Ms Prendergast and Mr Howard Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Trains, explained that light rail construction was 'at surface, it is right in front, it is disruptive', whereas for metro 'we are keeping the same tracks and most of the overhead wiring'.<sup>275</sup>
- 3.82** Further Mr Jon Lamonte, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Metro, noted the consultation and project planning which has occurred in order to minimise construction impacts:

I should say that there has been an enormous amount of consultation, including with businesses, to get to this point and we have reflected in the way we have approached the comments that have come in to reduce the length of any closures that we have done, and done all of that in holiday times. We have done that. We have tried wherever we can to accommodate what people have told us.<sup>276</sup>

- 3.83** In addition, the NSW Government noted: 'Impacts to local businesses will be reduced because construction at each station will be completed in one year instead of two'.<sup>277</sup>

## Planning and development

- 3.84** During the inquiry, stakeholders shared views about the potential for growth and development along the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor. There were some concerns expressed about the approach to future development. There was also discussion about heritage conservation and the design of the Bankstown interchange.

<sup>272</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 24. See also Submission 36, Ms Anne Nolan, p 3; Submission 81, KOAS (Keep Our Area Suburban), p 9; Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 15.

<sup>273</sup> Submission 62, Inner West Council, Appendix 1, p xxi.

<sup>274</sup> See Evidence, Ms Coorey, 6 November 2019, p 56; Submission 36, Ms Anne Nolan, p 3; Submission 38a, Hurlstone Park Association, p 6; Submission 81, KOAS (Keep Our Area Suburban), pp 9-10; Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 24; Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 15.

<sup>275</sup> Evidence, Ms Prendergast and Mr Collins, 7 November 2019, p 60.

<sup>276</sup> Evidence, Mr Lamonte, 7 November 2019, p 60.

<sup>277</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 30.

### Development along the corridor

- 3.85** Given the connection between transport planning and development along the corridor, most stakeholders acknowledged that long term development and growth is likely to occur.
- 3.86** In fact, the NSW Government informed the committee that as 'a city-shaping project' Metro City & Southwest would have 'productivity or wider economic benefits of \$2,713 million', as well as 'city building or land use benefits of \$1,157 million'. The NSW Government's submission detailed a wide range of anticipated benefits for the economy and the community.<sup>278</sup>
- 3.87** In particular, it was noted that 'Sydney Metro City & Southwest will enable businesses to become effectively closer together, by reducing travel times between major economic centres, and between economic centres and potential employees'.<sup>279</sup>
- 3.88** Reflecting on this uplift, the Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce acknowledged that the economic growth opportunities associated with the project underpinned its support for Metro Southwest more broadly.<sup>280</sup>
- 3.89** Mr Wally Mehanna, Chief Executive Officer, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, advised the committee that 'we are already seeing additional investment in Bankstown in anticipation of the Metro conversion'. He noted that some corporate investments being made are 'contributing to the revitalisation of the Bankstown CBD'.<sup>281</sup>
- 3.90** However, the committee also heard that the impact of associated land use development could negatively impact local industries along the corridor. Associate Professor Kelsie Dadd, Spokesperson, Save Marrickville, stated that the Inner West needs to retain its 'vibrant industrial area' in order to ensure that heavy industry and factory services can be locally provided to residents and critical infrastructure such as the airport. Associate Professor Dadd said if factories 'were to go out west then all of that would have to be transported by trucks into the city. ... There is a place for industry in the inner city'.<sup>282</sup>
- 3.91** The committee generally heard that communities wanted well-considered development along the corridor. For example, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue advocated for 'quality placemaking', contending 'eventual densification of station precincts is inescapable' but it must be undertaken with a credible social licence. It stated:

... planners and developers must be investing in a social licence to operate within these communities, through undertaking to deliver open spaces, social and affordable housing, essential services and amenity and an overarching commitment to quality placemaking. Sadly, in the most recent development boom across Greater Sydney, this

<sup>278</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, pp 18-19.

<sup>279</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, pp 18-19.

<sup>280</sup> Submission 51, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, p 2.

<sup>281</sup> Evidence, Mr Wally Mehanna, Chief Executive Officer, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, 6 November 2019, p 23. See also Submission 7, Name suppressed, p 1.

<sup>282</sup> Evidence, Associate Professor Kelsie Dadd, Spokesperson, Save Marrickville, 6 November 2019, p 53.

social licence and quality focus has been lacking in many cases, fuelling the community pushback against growth and density.<sup>283</sup>

**3.92** Similarly, Associate Professor Dadd advised the committee that Save Marrickville was not against development per se, but that development must be undertaken carefully to take into account local character:

We have new apartments being built, and many of the new apartments are going up above shops along our shopping strips. So they are not impacting on the local character. The facades of the buildings not only stay the same but many of them are being done up so that they look quite nice. That type of development brings new people into the community but enhances the local community. It brings people back to the local shopping strips. It does not see the destruction of the houses. Those houses, with their modifications as a result of immigration over the years, is part of our character. We like our Greek-ified little residences, or to walk past houses with a Buddha out the front from the Vietnamese. It is all part of the character of Marrickville, and what brings people into the area. I would hate to see that destroyed.<sup>284</sup>

**3.93** Community groups expressed concern that a combination of factors threatened good planning and development outcomes. A range of concerns were raised with the committee including:

- distance based re-zonings<sup>285</sup>
- the absence of heritage assessments and the potential for heritage loss<sup>286</sup>
- a lack of consideration for community development, including improved public amenity and open space<sup>287</sup>
- removal of the Greenway Southwest active transport project<sup>288</sup>
- the impact of development targets.<sup>289</sup>

**3.94** In particular, the committee heard that the combination of rail and non-rail development has resulted in community fear of indiscriminate overdevelopment.<sup>290</sup> Save Marrickville held concerns that land use development associated with Metro Southwest may adversely affect their community, stating:

Save Marrickville sees the conversion of the existing train line to a metro system as a gateway for privatisation of infrastructure, significant over-development and severe destruction of heritage suburbs ...

<sup>283</sup> Submission 97, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 2.

<sup>284</sup> Evidence, Associate Professor Dadd, 6 November 2019, p 48. See also Evidence, Dr Czernkowski, 6 November 2019, p 34; Evidence, Mr Gareth Wreford, Committee member, Cooks River Valley Association Inc, 7 November 2019, p 46.

<sup>285</sup> Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 20.

<sup>286</sup> Submission 29, National Trust of Australia (New South Wales), p 2; Submission 84, Save Marrickville, p 2.

<sup>287</sup> Submission 62, Inner West Council, p 2.

<sup>288</sup> Submission 62, Inner West Council, Appendix 2, p 2.

<sup>289</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 19.

<sup>290</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 1; Submission 84, Save Marrickville, p 1; Correspondence, Ms Heather Davie, received 9 December 2019, p 4.

Development proposed in the Revised Marrickville Plan extended 800 m from the station into areas of single storey Victorian and Federation streetscapes, and further away along industrial corridors that were seen as having potential for uplift. We feel that the heritage destruction is embedded in the Metro plans as the Metro is linked to urban renewal and transit-orientated development. The Metro is being used to force high-density, poor quality development onto low density, established, heritage-rich and vibrant neighbourhoods. To date this has only resulted in poor quality development and heritage destruction.<sup>291</sup>

- 3.95** The committee also heard that the potential for development resulting from Metro Southwest has placed pressure on the community and resulted in planning uncertainty. This was a concern expressed by Dr Robert Czernkowski, Member, Locals for Metro Southwest, who stated: 'As long as this uncertainty continues we cannot do anything. ... Clarity one way or another is what we seek'.<sup>292</sup>
- 3.96** Both Inner West Council and Canterbury Bankstown Council referred to the importance of having a whole of government approach to planning where transport and land use planning intertwines. Canterbury Bankstown Council stated that the 'focus has been on the delivery of a simplified transport solution rather than a 'whole of Government' place making project, as has been undertaken around the world on similar transport projects'.<sup>293</sup>
- 3.97** Canterbury Bankstown Council also reflected on the input it is having into the project, advising that very little of its input has been addressed by the NSW Government.<sup>294</sup> The Council stated that 'very few of the recommendations or matters raised by Council have been responded to, or adequately addressed by Sydney Metro'.<sup>295</sup> Additionally, 'few suggestions [were] incorporated into the Conditions of Consent issued by the Department of Planning'.<sup>296</sup>
- 3.98** In this context, Canterbury Bankstown Council stated that a 'project of this scale needs to be delivered through a 'whole of Government' lens' but that agency collaboration 'is clearly lacking at this point in time'.<sup>297</sup>
- 3.99** The impact of the project on local councils at an administrative level was also discussed. Mr Ken Welsh, Team Lead Strategic Transport Planning, Inner West Council, explained to the committee the nature and frequency of meetings between council and transport staff:

I am spending a lot of time—I cannot even ballpark it—on it. We have monthly meetings with three of the contractor groups. We have a combined Metro meeting—called the TTLG, which is the Traffic and Transport Liaison Group—which gives us an overview of the whole Metro project. We also have specific meetings on topics or studies. ... there is probably eight—maybe 10—meetings a month where council and Metro are across the table. We have a really strong relationship with several parts of the

<sup>291</sup> Submission 84, Save Marrickville, p 1.

<sup>292</sup> Evidence, Dr Czernkowski, 6 November 2019, pp 26-27.

<sup>293</sup> Submission 66, Canterbury Bankstown Council, p 2; Submission 62, Inner West Council, Appendix 1, p iii.

<sup>294</sup> Submission 66, Canterbury Bankstown Council, p 2.

<sup>295</sup> Submission 66, Canterbury Bankstown Council, p 2.

<sup>296</sup> Submission 66, Canterbury Bankstown Council, p 2.

<sup>297</sup> Submission 66, Canterbury Bankstown Council, p 3.

Metro team so the liaison is ongoing. If an issue arises we rarely have to take it to a higher level. It can usually be resolved at one of these meetings.<sup>298</sup>

- 3.100** On the impact this is having on council resources, Mr Welsh stated that the Council is 'currently strained to be able to service all of the projects' occurring with the council area.<sup>299</sup>
- 3.101** In light of concerns regarding the cumulative impacts of the construction of Metro Southwest and development associated with urban renewal, the Inner West Council proposed that there be 'an embargo on up-zonings' until the completion of the metro project.<sup>300</sup>
- 3.102** Inner West Council argued that this would limit potentially detrimental cumulative impacts on local communities, by ensuring adequate assessment of all projects along the corridor and facilitating a more coordinated and considered approach to development.<sup>301</sup> Save Marrickville supported this proposal.<sup>302</sup>

### **Heritage conservation**

- 3.103** Heritage conservation, both at train stations and in surrounding communities, was a critical issue discussed during the inquiry. As discussed in Chapter 2, the committee heard that initially Metro Southwest proposed to replace the stations and platforms along the corridor but following community consultation the project was revised and stations and platforms would be repurposed in order to retain local heritage.<sup>303</sup>
- 3.104** In evidence to the committee Mr Tim Parker, Executive Director, Projects, Sydney Metro, reflected on the consultation process relating to the retention of station heritage and the resulting project changes. He stated that all heritage buildings will be retained and that they are 'coming up with some innovative solutions so that we can actually convert these lovely 124-year-old stations'.<sup>304</sup>
- 3.105** However, despite project changes and commitments to retain station heritage, there was still some concerns expressed about potential heritage loss. Marrickville Residents' Action Group stated that the 'community and experts continue to have grave concerns about heritage/character destruction and diminution'.<sup>305</sup>
- 3.106** Consequently, a few community groups, including the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, are seeking guarantees from government that the heritage 'preservation of station buildings,

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<sup>298</sup> Evidence, Mr Welsh, 6 November 2019, p 6.

<sup>299</sup> Evidence, Mr Welsh, 6 November 2019, p 9.

<sup>300</sup> Submission 62, Inner West Council, Appendix 1, p xxxi.

<sup>301</sup> Submission 62, Inner West Council, Appendix 1, p xxxi.

<sup>302</sup> Submission 84, Save Marrickville, p 2.

<sup>303</sup> Submission 29, National Trust of Australia (NSW), p 2.

<sup>304</sup> Evidence, Mr Parker, 7 November 2019, p 55.

<sup>305</sup> Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 19.

platforms, station entrances and booking offices' will occur, even if 'design difficulties present themselves'.<sup>306</sup>

- 3.107** During the inquiry, the National Trust of Australia (New South Wales) also noted that 'deep community concern had been expressed to the National Trust on the impacts of proposed rezonings on heritage in some of these Station precincts'.<sup>307</sup>
- 3.108** In particular, the National Trust drew the committee's attention to the significant interwar period housing in the Canterbury Local Government Area, as well as the incomplete heritage conservation assessments in the Local Environmental Plans for both Canterbury and Bankstown. The National Trust expressed concern that in the absence of heritage assessments, the proposed rezoning would result in 'demolition of a considerable quantity of historic suburban fabric'.<sup>308</sup>

### **Design of the Bankstown interchange**

- 3.109** Following the completion of Metro Southwest, Bankstown station will become an interchange for Sydney Trains and Sydney Metro services. The future design of this station was an issue discussed by stakeholders.
- 3.110** One aspect raised was the impact of the interchange design on local planning aspirations for the Bankstown CBD. Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce advised the committee that it saw Metro Southwest as 'an opportunity that cannot be underestimated', including for 'undergrounding the current Bankstown rail line'.<sup>309</sup> The Chamber argued this would significantly benefit the Bankstown CBD:

It is our view that the existing rail line has inhibited growth of the Bankstown CBD by dividing it in two. Undergrounding the rail line would reduce traffic congestion caused by the limited number of roads that cross the rail line. It would also create the opportunity for a bustling open area linking and surrounded by what will be the main buildings in the future – The University, a revitalised shopping centre, Bankstown Sports Club, Paul Keating Theatre, Council offices, Bankstown RSL and potentially a relocated hospital.<sup>310</sup>

- 3.111** Other stakeholders, including the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, similarly advocated for undergrounding of the Bankstown interchange. Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue noted that 'with the conversion and station upgrade work soon going to market for procurement, we are fast approaching a critical decision point on this aspect of the project'. The Dialogue argued this was a 'once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform the Bankstown CBD' and remove 'the barrier created by the 100-year old train line'.<sup>311</sup>

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<sup>306</sup> Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 4; Submission 38, Hurlstone Park Association, pp 10-12; Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, p 3.

<sup>307</sup> Submission 29, National Trust of Australia (New South Wales), p 1.

<sup>308</sup> Submission 29, National Trust of Australia (New South Wales), p 2.

<sup>309</sup> Submission 51, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, Appendix 1, p 1.

<sup>310</sup> Submission 51, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, p 3.

<sup>311</sup> Submission 97, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, p 2; Submission 66, Canterbury Bankstown Council, p 2.

- 3.112** However, one concern discussed by inquiry participants was the potential length of the interchange. Mr Roydon Ng, Co-Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line, remarked:

The Government has proposed an end to end interchange where the metro stops at the eastern end of the existing Bankstown station and the Sydney train stops at the current platforms. ... I believe the Bankstown Council, then administrator, said that it would take up to 450 metres to walk from one end of Bankstown station down to the metro end of the platforms.<sup>312</sup>

- 3.113** Ms Heather Davie was critical of the impact a lengthy interchange design would have on commuters, stating it 'will increase travel times and make it harder for the elderly and less mobile commuters and parents with prams and young children to travel'.<sup>313</sup>

- 3.114** In response to these concerns, Transport for NSW stated:

At Bankstown Station, the existing platforms will be extended so that essentially the front of a metro train pulls up near the back of a suburban train. Subject to final design development, there will be a short, flat, level walk from the front of one train to the back of the other. ...

The distance from the back of one train to the front of the other is expected to be just over 100 metres. This is comparable to the walking distance from the Northern end of Platform 20 at Central to the Central Station Grand Concourse.<sup>314</sup>

## **Environmental impacts**

- 3.115** The environmental impacts of Metro Southwest along the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor were also examined during the inquiry. This section explores two key issues identified as areas of concern for stakeholders—the impact of the vegetation strategy on biodiversity protection and management, and the impact of fencing on wildlife.

### **Vegetation strategy**

- 3.116** The vegetation strategy for Metro Southwest includes consideration of tree management, vegetation conservation and the impact on landscape along the corridor.
- 3.117** During the inquiry, some participants asserted that the project biodiversity assessment was insufficient and the resulting vegetation strategy may not ensure the environmental impact of the project is sufficiently minimised.<sup>315</sup>
- 3.118** Based on local assessments, the Inner West Council advised the committee that it disagreed with the project's assessment that local biodiversity loss will be 'restricted', stating:

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<sup>312</sup> Evidence, Mr Ng, 6 November 2019, p 20.

<sup>313</sup> Submission 69, Ms Heather Davie, p 12.

<sup>314</sup> Answers to supplementary questions, Transport for NSW, 8 January 2020. See also Evidence, Mr Lamonte, 7 November 2019, p 58.

<sup>315</sup> See Submission 62, Inner West Council, Appendix 1, p 22; Submission 80, Cooks River Valley Association, pp 1 and 3; Evidence, Mr Wreford, 7 November 2019, pp 43-44.

Council disagrees with these comments and considers the cumulative impacts of these projects and developments on biodiversity as significant. There is already very limited habitat available for local native fauna species and the ongoing clearing of remaining vegetation as a result of each new project or development, whether native or otherwise, is a threat to the viability of fauna and flora species and communities.<sup>316</sup>

- 3.119** The impact of the vegetation strategy on natural heritage was also discussed with the committee. The Inner West Council highlighted that vegetation surrounding Dulwich Hill Station is listed as a natural heritage area and emphasised that it must be 'retained and protected'. In its submission to the *Metro City & Southwest Sydenham to Bankstown Environmental Impact Statement*, the Council explained:

In an urban area which has already lost almost all of the original pre European vegetation, the site is locally very significant. Given its very local significance in addition to Council listing the site as a natural heritage area (Marrickville LEP), Council requests that the project recognises this very local significance as a seed orchard ... for ongoing local biodiversity projects and as habitat and connection for locally significant and declining small bird species.<sup>317</sup>

- 3.120** A related issue concerned the impact of tree management plans on biodiversity along the corridor. The committee heard that the current strategy avoids the removal of trees only 'if possible'.<sup>318</sup>

- 3.121** While it was acknowledged that Sydney Metro had revised the number of mature trees expected to be removed from 900 to 500, and committed to two for one replacement of trees above 3 meters, stakeholders continued to express concerns regarding the impact of the proposed approach to tree management. Mr Gareth Wreford, Committee member, Cooks River Valley Association Inc, discussed some of the concerns held in this regard:

Metro, in fairness, has articulated a two-for-one tree replacement policy. The question then comes down to if you have a mature tree—which might be 30 to 50 years old—and you are replacing it with a large sapling or even two large saplings, you still have to wait 30, 40 or 50 years before it can provide a decent habitat for local wildlife. The other question is where those trees go. There are some mixed statements in the many metro documents. The best I can work out is that those trees look like they can be replaced outside of the rail corridor, within 500 metres of the rail corridor ...

... The other concern also would be that you might end up with the same number of trees, or an increased number of trees, in the overall catchment but you will end up with less in the corridor itself. So what you lose is that stepping-stone concept. ... What you are increasing is that hard barrier for wildlife to move back and forth across.<sup>319</sup>

- 3.122** Mr Wreford also noted the lack of consideration of understory vegetation along the corridor, including the management of trees currently less than three metres tall and landscape re-

<sup>316</sup> Submission 62, Inner West Council, Appendix 1, p 35.

<sup>317</sup> Submission 62, Inner West Council, Appendix 1, p 34.

<sup>318</sup> Submission 62, Inner West Council, Appendix 1, p 22; Evidence, Mr Wreford, 7 November 2019, pp 43-44.

<sup>319</sup> Evidence, Mr Wreford, 7 November 2019, pp 43-44. See also Submission 62, Inner West Council, Appendix 1, p 22; Submission 84, Save Marrickville, p 2.

vegetation with native plants. Mr Wreford commented that the 'understorey is a bit of a gap, and quite a significant one'.<sup>320</sup>

**3.123** Questions were raised concerning the requirements of Sydney Trains and Sydney Metro to adhere to both project vegetation strategies as well as existing government guidelines. Mr Wreford explained that the Cooks River Valley Association Inc was of the understanding that 'any tree removed by Sydney Trains does not need to be replaced' in accordance with project commitments. Equally, Mr Wreford expressed uncertainty that Sydney Metro were required to observe existing government vegetation strategies as they were a 'separate entity'.<sup>321</sup>

**3.124** A number of inquiry participants advocated for improved biodiversity protection and vegetation management during the project. Inner West Council expressed the view that the project should complement the vegetation strategy of the corridor, stating:

All Councils are working collaboratively to protect and enhance local biodiversity; the project must also respect and work with this aim through retaining as much weedy and native vegetation as possible to continue to provide important habitat and connectivity for local native fauna through the project design process.

All damage and removal of vegetation and native habitat should be replaced on-site or at a minimum offset locally with funding and resources provided to Councils and others charged with responsibility to do this and manage the sites ongoing.<sup>322</sup>

**3.125** In this regard Mr Ken Welsh, Team Lead Strategic Transport Planning, Inner West Council, told the committee that the Council is consulting with Sydney Metro to address environmental concerns 'in an ongoing process'.<sup>323</sup>

**3.126** The Cooks River Valley Association Inc. contended that the project provides 'a major opportunity to make a contribution to biodiversity at scale', not to be missed. The Association recommended improvements to the approach to vegetation protection and regeneration in order to achieve a positive environmental impact from the Metro Southwest project.<sup>324</sup>

**3.127** The NSW Government advised that the vegetation strategy is designed so that when 'services start, the railway corridor will essentially look the same from nearby areas as it does now', explaining:

Trees will be removed only where absolutely necessary to complete the works at each station and along the corridor. ... No remnant native vegetation will be removed as part

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<sup>320</sup> Evidence, Mr Wreford, 7 November 2019, p 44. See also Submission 80, Cooks River Valley Association Inc, pp 3-4.

<sup>321</sup> Evidence, Mr Wreford, 7 November 2019, pp 45 and 46. See also Submission 80, Cooks River Valley Association Inc, pp 4-5.

<sup>322</sup> Submission 62, Inner West Council, Appendix 1, p 35. See also Submission 35, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 65, Professor Ian Tyrrell, p 2; Submission 69, Ms Heather Davie, p 12; Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 26; Submission 100, Marrickville Residents' Action Group, pp 16-17; Submission 84, Save Marrickville, p 2.

<sup>323</sup> Evidence, Mr Welsh, 6 November 2019, p 2.

<sup>324</sup> Submission 80, Cooks River Valley Association Inc., pp 1-2.

of the project including the Downy Wattle (*Acacia pubescens*) within the project area.  
 ... Visual impacts during construction will be reduced...<sup>325</sup>

### Fencing

- 3.128** The environmental impact of secondary security fencing was also discussed by some inquiry participants.
- 3.129** The committee was informed that in addition to the existing rail fencing, '2.4 to 2.7m high fine mesh security fencing' was being installed along the 13.5 km length of the Metro Southwest corridor.<sup>326</sup>
- 3.130** The height and style of fencing proposed was a concern for some stakeholders, who argued it would be a barrier to animal movement and compound the project impacts on wildlife.<sup>327</sup> For example, the Cooks River Valley Association Inc. stated that, 'the fine mesh will impede the movement of native animals by creating a permanent barrier for small birds, reptiles, marsupials and frogs'.<sup>328</sup>
- 3.131** The Cooks River Valley Association Inc. also asserted that without changes to the fencing specifications the biodiversity aims of Metro Southwest could not be achieved:

This impact has not been considered in Metro Southwest plans and makes the [Preferred Infrastructure Report] PIR statement that biodiversity will at least be maintained impossible to achieve without modifying the fence design. Metro Southwest should commit to using the Transport for NSW Boundary Fences Standard (T HR Cl 12160 ST) which states at Section 6 that considerations relating to boundary fences include protection or enhancement of biodiversity and visual impact or amenity.<sup>329</sup>

- 3.132** The Cooks River Valley Association Inc recommended that the security fence be redesigned or reconsidered to ensure the movement of wildlife across the metro corridor.<sup>330</sup>

### Committee comment

- 3.133** The committee acknowledges that conversion of the Sydenham to Bankstown line as part of the Metro Southwest project may provide some commuters with faster access to new destinations. Other commuters, however, are likely to be impacted negatively, potentially having to switch between different forms of transport, stand during long journeys and face overcrowding.

<sup>325</sup> Submission 71, NSW Government, p 30.

<sup>326</sup> See Evidence, Mr Wreford, 7 November 2019, p 40; Submission 80, Cooks River Valley Association Inc., p 2; Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 30.

<sup>327</sup> See Submission 80, Cooks River Valley Association Inc., p 2; Submission 35, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 65, Professor Ian Tyrrell, p 2; and Submission 92, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, p 26.

<sup>328</sup> Submission 80, Cooks River Valley Association Inc., p 2.

<sup>329</sup> Submission 80, Cooks River Valley Association Inc., p 2.

<sup>330</sup> See Submission 80, Cooks River Valley Association Inc., pp 1-2.

- 3.134** In the committee's view, community concerns about reduced seating, capacity limitations and accessibility issues were not satisfactorily addressed during this inquiry. In terms of accessibility, we note that there was minimal evidence put forward to establish the number of seats on metro which would be available to those with accessibility needs.
- 3.135** In addition to this, the committee notes that students and others travelling to the Camperdown education and health precinct will likely be disadvantaged, also impacted by longer travel times to get to University and the need to switch between different forms of transport. In this regard, the committee acknowledges the merit of potentially including a Camperdown station on Metro West.
- 3.136** Based on the evidence received, the committee acknowledges that commuters who travel into the Sydney CBD from west of Bankstown will be disproportionately affected by the conversion of the line to metro, as direct access to the Sydney CBD will be cut off and there will be reduced service frequency and longer travel times.

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**Recommendation 5**

That the NSW Government restore regular direct services to the city via Lidcombe for those stations west of Bankstown affected by the conversion.

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- 3.137** The committee also notes community concerns relating to the potential impacts of construction on the public and businesses. It also acknowledges the disruption that will be experienced during the temporary transport arrangements, and the disproportionate impact of that disruption on people with disability and others with limited mobility.
- 3.138** As outlined in Chapter 2, it is the committee's view that the case for the Metro Southwest project has not been adequately made, and that the conversion should not proceed, leaving Metro City to terminate at Sydenham. If, however, the project proceeds, the committee makes recommendations which seek to minimise project impacts and improve outcomes for communities along the corridor.
- 3.139** In particular, the committee believes that further consultation is needed in relation to the temporary transport arrangements. The evidence before the committee suggests that to date the NSW Government has failed to adequately consult or engage with the community in relation to these arrangements. Community opposition to the project has been exacerbated by the lack of opportunity for genuine community input or timely information in relation to details of track work, bus service replacements and other arrangements.
- 3.140** In terms of planning and development, the committee acknowledges that there is community consensus in relation to the need for well-considered development and planning along the corridor. The committee supports a whole of government approach in this regard, with collaboration with local councils. Failing to do this has the potential to result in mediocre outcomes for suburbs along the corridor.
- 3.141** Given the significance of this project, the committee considers it incumbent on the government to ensure optimal outcomes are achieved throughout the project and that there is added value for local communities. Reflecting on project timelines, the committee strongly believes

considerable opportunity remains to minimise project impacts and maximise benefits for local communities.

- 3.142** Heritage conservation is another area that the committee believes action should be taken. The committee recognises that the retention of heritage is a key community concern. The committee understands that despite project changes and commitments, stakeholders continue to hold concerns that the impact of the project and associated strategies will result in heritage losses.
- 3.143** Therefore, the committee recommends that, should the project proceed, the NSW Government ensure that all heritage aspects along the rail corridor, including at train stations and platforms and in areas surrounding stations, are retained and protected for future generations, through full heritage assessments and sensitive development occurring in conjunction with local communities.

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### **Recommendation 6**

That the NSW Government ensure that all heritage aspects of the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor, including train stations themselves, are retained and protected for future generations.

- 3.144** Similarly, the committee sees merit in assessing options for undergrounding of the Bankstown interchange. As a result, we recommend that the design for the Bankstown interchange be reviewed by Transport for NSW, in collaboration with the Department of Planning and Bankstown Local Council, and options for an underground interchange be assessed in order for local planning goals to be fully explored and realised.

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### **Recommendation 7**

That Sydney Metro and Transport for NSW review the design for the Bankstown interchange, in collaboration with the Department of Planning and Bankstown Local Council.

- 3.145** In particular, the committee notes the importance of ongoing collaboration between key stakeholders to improve project outcomes and reduce negative impacts.
- 3.146** We recognise, however, that this type of approach will place pressure on local government, considering a number of local councils are already feeling constrained. While the committee acknowledges that councils have opportunities to seek additional support in relation to some planning activities, it is nevertheless of the view that local councils would benefit from additional resourcing to ensure that optimal outcomes are achieved from Metro Southwest. The committee therefore makes a recommendation in this regard.

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### **Recommendation 8**

That the NSW Government provide additional resources to Inner West Council and Canterbury Bankstown Council for the purposes of collaborating on the Metro Southwest project, to ensure optimal project outcomes can be achieved.

- 3.147** Finally, the committee is not convinced that existing strategies are sufficient to protect wildlife and vegetation along the corridor. In light of the evidence received, a biodiversity management review is warranted to ensure that all wildlife and vegetation in the affected rail corridor experience minimal project impacts and are adequately protected and supported in recovery.

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**Recommendation 9**

That the NSW Government review the biodiversity management strategy for Metro Southwest, including vegetation and fencing requirements, to ensure that all wildlife and vegetation in the affected rail corridor experience minimal project impacts and are adequately protected and supported in recovery.

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## Appendix 1 Submissions

No.	Author
1	Ms Julie Rudnicka
2	Mr Kevin and Ms Maria Tallentire
3	Mr Antonio Serbati
4	Name suppressed
5	Name suppressed
6	Name suppressed
7	Name suppressed
8	Name suppressed
9	Name suppressed
10	Ms Ruth Painter
11	Peter Stein
12	Name suppressed
13	Ms Lina Guo
14	Mr Mathew Hounsell
15	Name suppressed
16	Name suppressed
17	Name suppressed
18	Mr Taufik Abidin
19	Ms Zrinka Lemezina
20	Name suppressed
21	Name suppressed
22	Confidential
23	Name suppressed
24	Name suppressed
25	Ms Donna Craigie
26	Canterbury Racecourse Action Group
27	Mr Alex Wardrop
28	Ms Kate Lumley
29	National Trust of Australia (New South Wales)
30	Mr John Austen
30a	Mr John Austen
30b	Mr John Austen

<b>No.</b>	<b>Author</b>
31	Mr Michael Summers
32	Ms Kathryn Harwood
33	Ms Barbara McKellar and Mr Erik Johansen
34	Name suppressed
35	Name suppressed
36	Ms Anne Nolan
37	Ms Marie Healy
38	Hurlstone Park Association
38a	Hurlstone Park Association
39	Mr Tony Rodi
40	Canterbury Greens
41	Name suppressed
42	Name suppressed
43	Confidential
44	Mr Grant Mistler
45	Mrs Debra Miniutti
46	Mr Richard Ure
47	Mr Ron Chinchin
48	Mr Geoffrey Williamson
49	Mr David Patterson
50	Name suppressed
51	Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce
52	Confidential
53	Mr Jim Morris
54	Ms Aisla Evans
55	Confidential
56	Name suppressed
57	The University of Sydney
58	Mr Stephen Longhurst
59	Name suppressed
60	Mrs Margaret Fasan
61	Name suppressed
62	Inner West Council
63	Mr Brian Hudson
64	Mr Matt Mushalik

<b>No.</b>	<b>Author</b>
65	Professor Ian Tyrrell
66	Canterbury Bankstown Council
67	Marrickville Heritage Society Inc
68	Mr John Rotherham
69	Ms Heather Davie
70	Mr Kevin Moss
71	NSW Government
72	Ms Tania Mihailuk, MP, Member for Bankstown
73	Ms Louise Dortins
74	Dr Safwat Riad
75	Mr Wayne Godfrey
76	Ms Carolyn Smith
77	Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc
78	Confidential
79	The Battler
80	The Cooks River Valley Association
81	KOAS (Keep Our Area Suburban)
81a	KOAS (Keep Our Area Suburban)
82	Name suppressed
83	Australian Rail Tram and Bus Industry Union, NSW Branch
84	Save Marrickville
85	Confidential
86	Mr William Holliday
87	Locals for Metro Southwest
88	Mr Michael Katz
89	Name suppressed
90	Name suppressed
91	EcoTransit Sydney
91a	EcoTransit Sydney
92	Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance
93	Name suppressed
94	Name suppressed
95	Ms Andrea Turner
96	Mr Jihad Dib, MP, Member for Lakemba
97	Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue

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<b>No.</b>	<b>Author</b>
98	Mrs Carmel Elliott
99	Name suppressed
100	Marrickville Residents' Action Group
101	Mr John Kyriazis
102	Mr Roydon Ng
102a	Mr Roydon Ng
103	Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line
104	Ms Sophie Cotsis, MP, Member for Canterbury
105	Ms Jo Haylen, MP, Member for Summer Hill

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## Appendix 2 Witness at hearings

<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position and Organisation</b>
<b>Wednesday, 6 November 2019 Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney</b>	Mr Ken Welsh	Team Lead Strategic Transport Planning, Inner West Council
	Mr Peter Olive	Interim Convenor, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance
	Mr Roydon Ng	Co-Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line
	Mr Wally Mehanna	Chief Executive Officer, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce
	Mr Jason Arraj	Board Member, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce
	Mr Wes Brown	Member, Locals for Metro Southwest
	Dr Robert Czernkowski	Member, Locals for Metro Southwest
	Mr Greg Robinson	Director Campus Infrastructure & Services, University of Sydney
	Mr Christian Watts	Divisional Manager – Property & Development, Campus Infrastructure & Services, University of Sydney
	Ms Emma Jones	Executive Officer – Campus Infrastructure & Services, University of Sydney
	Ms Heather Davie	Member, Marrickville Residents' Action Group
	Associate Professor Kelsie Dadd	Spokesperson, Save Marrickville
	Dr Marie Healy	Committee member, Hurlstone Park Association (via teleconference)
Ms Barbara Coorey	Convenor, Keep Our Area Suburban	
<b>Thursday, 7 November 2019, Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney</b>	Mr Mathew Hounsell	Transport Analyst and Planner
	Mr Alex Wardrop	Railway Operations Researcher and Consultant
	Mr John Austen	Transport economist (retired)
	Mr Colin Schroeder	Co-convenor, EcoTransit Sydney

<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position and Organisation</b>
	Mr John Young	Director, Strategy and Communications, EcoTransit Sydney
	Mr Jim Donovan	Secretary, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc
	Mr Graham Quint	National Trust of Australia (New South Wales)
	Dr Scott MacArthur	President, Marrickville Heritage Society
	Ms Jennifer Newman	Chair, Cooks River Valley Association Inc
	Mr Gareth Wreford	Committee member, Cooks River Valley Association Inc
	Mr Jon Lamonte	Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Metro
	Mr Tim Parker	Executive Director, Projects, Sydney Metro
	Mr Howard Collins	Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Trains
	Ms Marg Prendergast	Coordinator General, Transport for NSW
<b>Tuesday, 10 December 2019, Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney</b>	Mr Howard Collins	Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Trains
	Mr Jon Lamonte	Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Metro
	Mr Tim Parker	Executive Director, Projects, Sydney Metro

## Appendix 3 Minutes

### Minutes no. 4

Thursday 22 August 2019

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and Customer Service

Members Lounge, Parliament House, Sydney at 9.15 am

#### 1. Members present

Ms Boyd, *Chair*

Mr Banasiak, *Deputy Chair*

Ms Cusack

Mr Fang

Mr Mallard (from 9.20 am)

Mr Mookhey

Mr Primrose

#### 2. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Cusack: That draft minutes no. 3 be confirmed.

#### 3. Correspondence

Nil.

#### 4. Consideration of proposed terms of reference

The Chair tabled a letter proposing the following self-reference:

1. That Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and Customer Service inquire into and report on aspects of the planned conversion of the Sydenham-Bankstown Line from heavy rail to metro (ie, the southwest part of the Sydney Metro City and Southwest project), including:
  - (a) the adequacy of the business case and viability of Metro,
  - (b) the consideration of alternatives for improving capacity and reducing congestion,
  - (c) the factors taken into account when comparing the alternatives and the robustness of the evidence used in decision-making,
  - (d) whether metro is a suitable means of transport over long distances,
  - (e) the consultation process undertaken with, and the adequacy of information given to, community, experts and other stakeholders,
  - (f) the impact on the environment and heritage conservation,
  - (g) any lobbying, political donations or other influence of the public and/ or private sector in relation to making that decision,
  - (h) the tender process for appointing private operators,
  - (i) the contractual arrangements entered into in respect of the project,
  - (j) the adequacy of temporary transport arrangements during the conversion process, including for people with a disability,
  - (k) the impact on the stations west of Bankstown, and
  - (l) any other related matter.

2. In considering and assessing the matters referred to in paragraph 1, that the committee may make use of relevant evidence given in relation to other transport projects in New South Wales (whether proposed, in construction or completed).
3. That the committee report by 20 November 2019.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That the terms of reference be amended by omitting paragraphs 2 and 3 and inserting instead:

- '2. That the committee report by Tuesday 31 March 2020.'

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That the committee adopt the terms of reference, as amended.

## **5. Conduct of the inquiry into the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion**

### **5.1 Closing date for submissions**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mookhey: That the closing date for submissions be Friday 4 October 2019.

### **5.2 Stakeholder list**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Primrose: That the secretariat circulate to members the Chair's proposed list of stakeholders to provide them with the opportunity to amend the list or nominate additional stakeholders, and that the committee agree to the stakeholder list by email, unless a meeting of the committee is required to resolve any disagreement.

### **5.3 Advertising**

The committee noted that all inquiries are advertised via Twitter, Facebook, stakeholder letters and a media release distributed to all media outlets in New South Wales.

### **5.4 Hearing dates**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Fang: That the timeline for hearings be considered by the committee following the receipt of submissions. Further, that hearing dates be determined by the Chair after consultation with members regarding their availability.

Mr Mallard joined the meeting.

## **6. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2019-2020**

### **6.1 Order for examination of portfolios**

The committee considered the time to be allocated to witnesses appearing for the Better Regulation and Innovation portfolio.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Fang: That the witnesses proposed to answer questions relating to portfolios allocated to Minister Anderson be invited to appear together for the duration of each session.

Mr Mookhey noted that the committee may consider reissuing an invitation to the Chief Executive Officer of iCare and the Commissioner of Revenue to answer questions in relation to the Customer Service portfolio during the supplementary hearings.

## **7. Adjournment**

The committee adjourned at 9.31 am, *sine die*.

Jenelle Moore  
**Committee Clerk**

**Minutes no. 13**

Wednesday 6 November 2019

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and Customer Service

Macquarie Room, Parliament House, 9.48 am

**1. Members present**

Ms Boyd, *Chair*

Mr Banasiak, *Deputy Chair* (until 4.00 pm)

Ms Cusack (from 10.12 am until 3.30 pm)

Mr D'Adam (*substituting for Mr Primrose*)

Mr Fang (*substituting for Mr Farraway*)

Ms Jackson (*substituting for Mr Mookbey*)

Mr Mallard

**2. Correspondence**

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

***Received:***

- 22 August 2019 – Email from Mr Roydon Ng, Convenor, Restore Inner West Line, to Chair, regarding the terms of reference for the inquiry.
- 29 October 2019 – Email from Mr Luke Turner, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, declining the invitation to appear as a witness.
- 31 October 2019 – Email from Mr James Carey, Canterbury Bankstown Council, declining the invitation to appear as a witness.

**3. Consideration of terms of reference**

The Chair tabled a letter proposing the following self-reference:

That, on completion of the inquiry into the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion, Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and Customer Service, inquire into and report on the operation of the *Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016* and in particular:

- (a) the operation of the regulatory system applying to the taxi industry,
- (b) specifically, the system of bailment that operates in relation to the taxi industry, any changes pursued by the NSW Government to the system of bailment since enactment of the legislation, and any changes that should be made,
- (c) the implementation of the industry assistance package for the taxi industry, including the Passenger Service Levy and how it has been applied,
- (d) the impact of the legislation on the value of taxi plates,
- (e) the role and function of the Point to Point Transport Commissioner, and
- (f) any other related matter.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee adopt the terms of reference as drafted.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That this inquiry not be publicised by the secretariat (on an inquiry webpage or via a media release) until it's commencement after the inquiry into the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion is finalised.

**4. Inquiry into Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion****4.1 Submissions**

***Public submissions***

The committee noted that the following submissions were published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee: submission nos. 1-3, 10, 11, 13, 14, 18, 19, 25-33, 36-40, 44-49, 51, 53, 54, 57, 58, 60, 62, 63-77, 79-81, 83, 84, 86-88, 91-92, 94-98, 100, 101, and 103-105.

***Partially confidential submissions***

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That the committee authorise the publication of submission nos: 4-9, 12, 15-17, 20, 21, 23, 24, 34, 35, 41, 42, 50, 56, 61, 89, 90, 93, and 99, with the exception of the author's name, which is to remain confidential, as per the request of the author.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That the committee authorise the publication of submission nos 59 and 82, with the exception of the author's name and/or identifying information and potential adverse mention, which is to remain confidential, as per the request of the author.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That the committee authorise the publication of submission no. 102 with the exception of identifying information of a third party which is to remain confidential, as per the recommendation of the secretariat.

***Confidential submissions***

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That the committee keep submission nos 22, 43, 52, 55, 78, and 85 confidential, as per the request of the author.

***Pro forma submissions***

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Jackson: That a sample of each pro forma be published on the inquiry website, including the number of responses to each pro forma, and that all pro forma responses be kept confidential.

**4.2 Allocation of questioning**

Resolved on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings on Wednesday, 6, and Thursday, 7 November 2019, be left in the hands of the Chair.

**4.3 Public hearing**

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding the broadcasting of proceedings and other matters.

The Chair declared the public hearing for the inquiry into the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion open for examination.

The following witness was sworn and examined:

- Mr Ken Welsh, Team Lead Strategic Transport Planning, Inner West Council.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses was sworn and examined:

- Mr Peter Olive, Interim Convenor, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance
- Mr Roydon Ng, Co-Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line.

Mr Ng tendered the following documents:

- Document entitled 'Sydney Rail Network'
- Document entitled 'Sydney Trains Network'
- Document entitled 'Sydney Trains Network'
- Document entitled 'CityRail Network'
- Video link entitled 'Locals for Metro South West', dated 3 November 2019
- Document by John Brew, Ron Christie, Bob O'Loughlin and Dick Day on the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion project, dated 3 July 2015
- Document entitled 'Sydenham to Bankstown Metro Preferred Infrastructure Report Submissions Tally'
- Document containing contact details for Restore Inner West Line and associated community groups and campaigns

- Document by Mr Roydon Ng entitled 'Andrew Constance's special video for "Locals for Metro Southwest"', including attachment nos 1 to 5
- Document by Mr Roydon Ng entitled 'Freedom of Information request to Hong Kong', including attachment nos 1 to 4
- Media Release of Restore Inner West Line entitled 'Better Rail Service 95 Years Ago', dated Sunday, 13 October 2019
- Media Release of Restore Inner West Line entitled 'Cumberland Residents Against Metro Southwest', dated Thursday, 10 October 2019
- Document by Mr Roydon Ng entitled 'Questions regarding Transport for NSW's submission'
- News article by The Sydney Morning Herald entitled 'Sydney Rapid Network to cut direct city service for commuters west of Bankstown', dated 24 November 2015
- Document by Mr Roydon Ng entitled 'Breaking up the Bankstown Line'
- Document of Transport for NSW entitled '2013 Customer Timetable: Stakeholder Engagement Plan', dated August 2013 (Draft)
- Document of Save T3 Bankstown Line entitled 'Organisation's submission to the Sydney Metro City & Southwest: Preferred Infrastructure Report (Application No SSI 17\_8256)' including attachment no. 1.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Wally Mehanna, Chief Executive Officer, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce
- Mr Jason Arraj, Board Member, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce
- Mr Wes Brown, Member, Locals for Metro Southwest
- Dr Robert Czernkowski, Member, Locals for Metro Southwest.

Mr Arraj tendered the following document:

- Correspondence from Tony Abboud, Snowden Parkes Real Estate Agents to Mr Wally Mehanna, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, regarding the North West Metro.

Ms Boyd tendered the following document:

- Correspondence from Belmore Shopkeepers Association to Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and Customer Service regarding the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion.

Ms Cusack left the meeting at 1.08 pm.

Mr Banasiak left the meeting at 1.20 pm.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses was sworn and examined:

- Mr Greg Robinson, Director – Campus Infrastructure & Services, University of Sydney
- Mr Christian Watts, Divisional Manager – Property & Development, Campus Infrastructure & Services, University of Sydney
- Ms Emma Jones, Executive Officer – Campus Infrastructure & Services, University of Sydney.

Mr Banasiak rejoined the meeting at 2.10 pm.

Ms Jackson left the meeting at 2.35 pm.

Ms Cusack rejoined the meeting at 2.45 pm.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses was sworn and examined:

- Ms Heather Davie, Member, Marrickville Residents' Action Group
- Associate Professor Kelsie Dadd, Spokesperson, Save Marrickville
- Dr Marie Healy, Committee member, Hurlstone Park Association (via teleconference).

Ms Cusack left the meeting at 3.30 pm.

Ms Jackson rejoined the meeting at 3.30 pm.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

Mr Banasiak left the meeting at 4.00 pm.

The following witness was sworn and examined:

- Ms Barbara Coorey, Keep Our Area Suburban.

Ms Coorey tendered the following documents:

- A supplementary submission, including attachments A to S
- Correspondence from Ms Barbara Coorey to Mr Rod Staples, Transport for NSW regarding the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion
- Document containing images of houses located along the Sydenham to Bankstown rail corridor
- Document containing an image of a model of potential medium to high density development at Belmore station
- Document containing an image of a model of potential medium to high density development at Lakemba station.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 4.34 pm.

The public and media withdrew.

#### **4.4 Tabled documents**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That consideration of all documents tendered during the public hearing of Wednesday, 6 November 2019, be deferred.

### **5. Adjournment**

The committee adjourned at 4.45 pm until 9.15 am, Thursday, 7 November 2019, Macquarie Room, Parliament House (*public hearing*).

Allison Stowe

**Committee Clerk**

### **Minutes no. 14**

Thursday 7 November 2019

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and Customer Service

Macquarie Room, Parliament House, 9.25 am

#### **1. Members present**

Ms Boyd, Chair

Mr Banasiak, Deputy Chair

Ms Cusack (from 10.00 am)

Mr D'Adam (*substituting for Mr Primrose*)

Mr Donnelly (*substituting for Mr Mookhey*)

Mr Fang (*substituting for Mr Farraway*)

Ms Ward (*substituting for Mr Mallard*) (until 4.19 pm)

## 2. Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion

### 2.1 Public hearing

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding the broadcasting of proceedings and other matters.

The Chair declared the public hearing for the inquiry into the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion open for examination.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Mathew Hounsell, Transport Analyst and Planner
- Mr Alex Wardrop, Railway Operations Researcher and Consultant
- Mr John Austen, Transport Economist (retired).

Mr Wardrop tendered the following document:

- Draft book extract, Mr Alex Wardrop, A Tale of Two Systems, 'Table 3.1: Historical Levels of Peak Hour Service on the Melbourne Metropolitan Railways' and 'Table 3.2: Historical Levels of Peak Hour Service on the Sydney Metropolitan Railways', pages 30-31.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

Ms Cusack left the meeting at 11.10 am.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Colin Schroeder, Co-convenor, EcoTransit Sydney
- Mr John Young, Director – Strategy and Communications, EcoTransit Sydney
- Mr Jim Donovan, Secretary, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc.

Mr Schroeder tendered the following document:

- News article by The Sydney Morning Herald, entitled 'NSW issues tender for Hong-Kong high rises at new Sydney Metro train stations', dated 20 February 2016.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

Ms Ward left the meeting at 12.00 pm.

Ms Cusack rejoined the meeting at 1.45 pm.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Graham Quint, Director of Conservation, National Trust of Australia (New South Wales)
- Dr Scott McArthur, President, Marrickville Heritage Society.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Ms Jennifer Newman, Chair, Cooks River Valley Association Inc.
- Mr Gareth Wreford, Committee member, Cooks River Valley Association Inc.

Mr Fang left the meeting at 3.07 pm.

Ms Ward rejoined the meeting at 3.15 pm.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Jon Lamonte, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Metro
- Mr Tim Parker, Executive Director, Projects, Sydney Metro
- Mr Howard Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Trains
- Ms Marg Prendergast, Coordinator General, Transport for NSW.

Mr Fang rejoined the meeting at 4.18 pm.

Ms Ward left the meeting at 4.19 pm.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 4.37 pm.

The public and media withdrew.

## **2.2 Tendered documents**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee accept and publish the following documents tendered during the public hearing:

- Draft book extract, Mr Alex Wardrop, A Tale of Two Systems, 'Table 3.1: Historical Levels of Peak Hour Service on the Melbourne Metropolitan Railways' and 'Table 3.2: Historical Levels of Peak Hour Service on the Sydney Metropolitan Railways', pages 30-31, tendered by Mr Alex Wardrop
- News article by The Sydney Morning Herald, entitled 'NSW issues tender for Hong-Kong high rises at new Sydney Metro train stations', dated 20 February 2016, tendered by Mr Colin Schroeder.

## **2.3 Additional public hearing**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the secretariat investigate opportunities to hold an additional public hearing for further examination of the witnesses from Transport for NSW.

## **3. Adjournment**

The committee adjourned at 4.45 pm, *sine die*.

Allison Stowe  
**Committee Clerk**

## **Minutes no. 16**

Tuesday, 10 December 2019

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and Customer Service

Jubilee Room, Parliament House, 1.47 pm

### **1. Members present**

Ms Boyd, *Chair*

Ms Cusack

Mr D'Adam (*substituting for Mr Primrose*)

Mr Fang (*substituting for Mr Farraway*)

Mr Mallard (until 2.57 pm)

Mr Mookhey

### **2. Apologies**

Mr Banasiak, *Deputy Chair*

### **3. Previous minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That draft minutes nos 13, 14 and 15 be confirmed.

### **4. Correspondence**

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

#### ***Received:***

- 6 November 2019 – Email from Rev Graham Nathan L Guy to the committee, regarding questioning during the public hearing of Wednesday, 6 November 2019
- 7 November 2019 – Email from Mr Roydon Ng, Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line to the Chair, providing additional information following the public hearing on Wednesday, 6 November 2019

- 10 November 2019 – Email from Mr Alex Wardrop, Railway Operations and Researcher Consultant to the secretariat, providing additional information following the public hearing on Thursday, 7 November 2019
- 14 November 2019 – Email from the Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC, Opposition Whip to the secretariat, advising the Hon Anthony D'Adam MLC will substitute for the Hon John Graham MLC for the duration of the inquiry into the Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion
- 14 November 2019 – Email from Mr John Austen to the secretariat, regarding questions asked at the public hearing on Thursday, 7 November 2019
- 19 November 2019 – Correspondence from the Hon Natasha Maclaren-Jones MLC, Government Whip, to the secretariat, advising that the Hon Wes Fang MLC will substitute for the Hon Sam Faraway MLC for the duration of the inquiry into the Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion
- 5 December 2019 – Correspondence from Ms Heather Davie to the Chair, providing additional information following the public hearing on Wednesday, 6 November 2019.

## 5. Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion

### 5.1 Submissions

#### *Public submissions*

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee authorise the publication of submission nos: 30a, 38a and 81a.

#### *Partially confidential submissions*

Mr Fang moved: That the committee authorise the publication of submission no. 94, including the author's name.

Question put and negated.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee authorise the publication of submission no. 94, with the exception of the author's name, which is to remain confidential, as per the request of the author.

#### *Pro forma submissions*

Mr Fang moved: That pro forma responses received after the closing date for submissions, not be accepted by the committee.

Question put and negated.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee accept pro forma responses received after the closing date for submissions, and that the sample pro forma published online be updated.

### 5.2 Tended documents

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee accept and publish the following documents tendered during the public hearing of Wednesday, 6 November 2019, with the exception of identifying personal contact information:

- Document entitled 'Sydney Rail Network', tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- Document entitled 'Sydney Trains Network', tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- Document entitled 'Sydney Trains Network', tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- Document entitled 'CityRail Network', tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- Video link entitled 'Locals for Metro South West', dated 3 November 2019, tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- Document by John Brew, Ron Christie, Bob O'Loughlin and Dick Day on the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion project, dated 3 July 2015, tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- Document entitled 'Sydenham to Bankstown Metro Preferred Infrastructure Report Submissions Tally', tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- Document containing contact details for Restore Inner West Line and associated community groups and campaigns, tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- Document by Mr Roydon Ng entitled 'Andrew Constance's special video for "Locals for Metro Southwest"', including attachment nos 1 to 5, tendered by Mr Roydon Ng

- Document by Mr Roydon Ng entitled 'Freedom of Information request to Hong Kong', including attachment nos 1 to 4, tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- Media Release of Restore Inner West Line entitled 'Better Rail Service 95 Years Ago', dated Sunday, 13 October 2019, tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- Media Release of Restore Inner West Line entitled 'Cumberland Residents Against Metro Southwest', dated Thursday, 10 October 2019, tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- Document by Mr Roydon Ng entitled 'Questions regarding Transport for NSW's submission', tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- News article by The Sydney Morning Herald entitled 'Sydney Rapid Network to cut direct city service for commuters west of Bankstown', dated 24 November 2015, tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- Document by Mr Roydon Ng entitled 'Breaking up the Bankstown Line', tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- Document of Transport for NSW entitled '2013 Customer Timetable: Stakeholder Engagement Plan', dated August 2013 (Draft), tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- Document of Save T3 Bankstown Line entitled 'Organisation's submission to the Sydney Metro City & Southwest: Preferred Infrastructure Report (Application No SSI 17\_8256)' including attachment no. 1, tendered by Mr Roydon Ng
- Correspondence from Tony Abboud, Snowden Parkes Real Estate Agents to Mr Wally Mehanna, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, regarding the North West Metro, tendered by Mr Jason Arraj
- Correspondence from Belmore Shopkeepers Association to Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and Customer Service regarding the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion, tendered by Ms Abigail Boyd
- Correspondence from Ms Barbara Coorey to Mr Rod Staples, Transport for NSW regarding the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion, tendered by Ms Barbara Coorey
- Document containing images of houses located along the Sydenham to Bankstown rail corridor, tendered by Ms Barbara Coorey
- Document containing an image of a model of potential medium to high density development at Belmore station, tendered by Ms Barbara Coorey
- Document containing an image of a model of potential medium to high density development at Lakemba station, tendered by Ms Barbara Coorey.

### **5.3 Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mookhey: That the committee authorise the publication of the answers to questions on notice and/or supplementary questions provided by the following witnesses:

- Mr Ken Welsh, Inner West Council, received 18 November 2019
- Mr Graham Quint, National Trust of Australia (New South Wales), received 22 November 2019
- Mr Roydon Ng, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line, received 30 November 2019
- Mr Colin Schroeder, EcoTransit Sydney, received 4 December 2019
- Ms Emma Jones, University of Sydney, received 5 December 2019
- Mr Peter Olive, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, received 5 December 2019
- Transport for NSW, received 6 December 2019.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mookhey: That all attachments to answers to questions on notice received from Mr Peter Olive, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, on 5 December 2019, be kept confidential, as per the request of the author.

### **5.4 Allocation of questioning**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Fang: That the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearing on Tuesday, 10 December 2019, be as follows:

- 1 hour and 20 minutes allocated to Opposition and cross bench members, with the sequence of questions to be left in the hands of the Chair, followed by
- 10 minutes allocated to Government members.

**5.5 Public hearing**

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding the broadcasting of proceedings and other matters.

The Chair declared the public hearing for the inquiry into the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion open for examination.

The following witnesses were examined on their former oath:

- Mr Howard Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Trains
- Mr Jon Lamonte, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Metro
- Mr Tim Parker, Executive Director, Projects, Sydney Metro

Mr Collins tendered the following documents:

- Document entitled 'Sydney rail network'
- Concept diagram of the Sydney Trains and Sydney Metro tracks at Sydenham station
- Network map of Sydney Trains and Sydney Metro city stations.

Mr Mallard left the meeting at 2.57 pm.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

**5.6 Tabled documents**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Fang: That the committee accept and publish the following documents tendered by Mr Howard Collins during the public hearing:

- Document entitled 'Sydney rail network'
- Concept diagram of the Sydney Trains and Sydney Metro tracks at Sydenham station
- Network map of Sydney Trains and Sydney Metro city stations.

**6. Adjournment**

The committee adjourned at 3.30 pm until Friday, 7 February 2020 (*public hearing for Digital Restart Fund Bill 2019 inquiry*).

Allison Stowe

**Committee Clerk**

**Minutes no. 17**

Friday 7 February 2020

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and Customer Service

Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney, 9.15 am

**1. Members present**

Ms Boyd, *Chair*

Mr Banasiak, *Deputy Chair*

Ms Cusack

Mr Fang (*until 9.40 am: for the Inquiry into the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion*)

Mr Farraway

Mr Mallard

Mr Mookhey

Mr Graham (*substituting for Mr D'Adam for the Inquiry into the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion*)

**2. Apologies**

Mr D'Adam (*Inquiry into the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion*)

**3. Previous minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That draft minutes nos. 10, 11 and 12 be confirmed.

**4. Correspondence**

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

***Received***

- 3 December 2019 – Email from Ms Shona Batge, a/g National Manager, Service Australia to the Chair, declining the invitation to make a submission to the Digital Restart Fund Bill 2019 inquiry.
- 3 December 2019 – Email from Ms Georgina Horsburgh, Associate, Department of Premier and Cabinet, seeking an extension to submit a NSW Government submission to the Digital Restart Fund Bill 2019 inquiry by 28 January 2020.
- 4 December 2019 – Email from Mr George-Philip de Wet, Chief Operating Officer, Digital Transformation Agency to the Chair, declining the invitation to make a submission to the Digital Restart Fund Bill 2019 inquiry.
- 3 February 2020 – Email from Ms Priya Pagaddinnimath, Office of the Hon. Victor Dominello MP, Minister for Customer Service to the secretariat declining on behalf of the Minister the invitation to attend a hearing on 7 February regarding the Digital Restart Fund Bill.

***Sent:***

- 31 October 2019 – Email from the secretariat to Mr Gavin Melvin, Office of the Hon Kevin Anderson MP, Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation, attaching transcript of evidence with questions on notice highlighted and instructions on how to correct the transcript and return answers to questions
- 31 October 2019 – Email from the secretariat to Ms Priya Pagaddinnimath, Office of the Hon Victor Dominello MP, Minister for Customer Service, attaching transcript of evidence with questions on notice highlighted, supplementary questions and instructions on how to correct the transcript and return answers to questions.
- 31 October 2019 – Email from the secretariat to Mr Andrew Dixon, Office of the Hon Andrew Constance MP, Minister for Transport and Roads, and Ms Sally White, Office of the Hon Paul Toole MP, Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, attaching transcript of evidence with questions on notice highlighted, supplementary questions and instructions on how to correct the transcript and return answers to questions.
- 29 January 2020 – Letter from the secretariat to the Hon Victor Dominello MP, Minister for Customer Service, inviting the Minister to appear at the Digital Restart Fund Bill 2019 inquiry hearing on Friday, 7 February 2020.

**5. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2019-2020 – procedural resolutions – further hearings**

The 2019-2020 Budget Estimates timetable for further hearings was agreed to by the House. Below is a table of Portfolio Committee No. 6 hearings:

Date	Portfolio
Monday 2 March 2020	Regional Transport and Roads (Toole)
Monday 9 March 2020	Customer Service (Dominello)
Wednesday 11 March 2020	Transport and Roads (Constance)
Monday 16 March 2020	Better Regulation and Innovation (Anderson)

**5.1 Total hearing time**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Graham: That:

- the portfolios of Regional Transport and Roads (Mr Toole) and Transport and Roads (Mr Constance), on their respective hearing dates, be examined as follows:
 

9.30 am – 12.30 pm	Hearing with Minister
12.30 pm – 2.00 pm	Lunch
2.00 pm – 5.00 pm	Hearing with Departmental staff
5.00 pm – 6.00 pm	Dinner
6.00 pm – 8.00 pm	Hearing with Departmental staff
- the portfolios of Customer Service (Mr Dominello) and Better Regulation and Innovation (Mr Anderson), on their respective hearing dates, be examined from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm and from 2.00 pm to 5.30 pm, with the first two and a half hours of the morning session and the first three hours of the afternoon session reserved for questioning equally by the Opposition and cross bench, and the last half an hour of each session reserved for Government questions, if desired.

**5.2 Order for examination of portfolios: If portfolios are not to be considered concurrently**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mookhey: That the portfolios under the same Minister be examined concurrently.

**5.3 Allocation of question time**

The committee noted that under the resolution establishing the Portfolio Committees, the sequence of questions at hearings is to alternate between opposition, crossbench and government members, with equal time allocated to each, unless the committee decides otherwise.

**5.4 Witness requests**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Graham: That no Parliamentary Secretaries be invited to attend as a witness.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Graham: That members forward witness requests to the secretariat by 4pm Friday 7 February 2020, with the secretariat to forward a compiled list to the Committee for approval.

**6. Inquiry into the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion****6.1 Request for information**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Graham: That the Chair requests the document titled *NSW Medium Term Rail Development Plan – Suburban & Intercity 2017* from Transport for NSW.

Mr Fang left the meeting.

**7. Inquiry into the provisions of the Digital Restart Fund Bill 2019****7.1 Public submissions**

The committee noted that the following submissions were published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee: submissions nos 1 to 4.

**7.2 Report deliberative**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mookhey: That the meeting deliberative be re-scheduled to a suitable time during 25-27 February, with the secretariat to canvass members' availability on behalf of the Chair.

**7.3 Circulation of the draft Chair's report**

The committee noted that the draft Chair's report will need to be submitted to members by 21 February 2020 pursuant to standing order 227, as amended by sessional order; and that this compresses the time available for drafting.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mallard: that members not ask supplementary questions after circulation of the hearing transcript.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mallard: that witnesses be asked to provide any answers to questions taken on notice and corrections within 5 days from the date the hearing transcript is sent.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Graham: that the Chair submit a draft report to the committee as soon as practicable prior to the report deliberative meeting.

#### **7.4 Public hearing**

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding the broadcasting of proceedings and other matters.

The following witnesses were sworn:

- Ms Samantha Gavel, NSW Privacy Commissioner, Information and Privacy Commission NSW
- Ms Elizabeth Tydd, NSW Information Commissioner, Information and Privacy Commission NSW

The witnesses were examined by the committee.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witness was sworn:

- Mr Scott Johnston, Acting Public Service Commissioner, Public Service Commission

The witness was examined by the committee.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

Ms Cusack left the meeting.

The following witness was sworn:

- Mr Greg Wells, NSW Government Chief Information and Digital Officer.

The witness was examined by the committee.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The public and media withdrew.

#### **8. Adjournment**

The committee adjourned at 1.30 pm until Thursday 27 February 2020, 1.30pm, Members Lounge, Parliament House (*report deliberative for the Digital Restart Fund Bill 2019*)

Stewart Smith/Joseph Cho  
**Clerk to the Committee**

#### **Minutes no. 22**

Monday 16 March 2020

Portfolio Committee No. 6 - Transport and Customer Service  
Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney, at 9.19 am

#### **1. Members present**

Ms Boyd, *Chair*

Mr Banasiak, *Deputy Chair* (until 11.44 am, from 1.05 pm to 2.05 pm, from 2.39 pm)

Mr Farlow (until 2.00 pm, from 2.45 pm)

Mr Farraway

Mr Graham (until 2.45 pm, from 3.24 pm)

Mr Mallard (from 9.50 am)

Mr Mookhey

Mrs Houssos (participating from 9.25 am until 2.23 pm)

Mr Pearson (participating from 9.23 am to 12.00 pm)

Mr Shoebridge (participating from 11.04 am to 11.40 am, from 1.01 pm to 2.03 pm)

## 2. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2019-2020 – further hearings

### 2.1 Order for examination of portfolios

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Graham: That the committee examine the portfolios of Better Regulation and Innovation concurrently:

- from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm, with the first two and a half hours reserved for questioning by the Opposition and cross bench, in 20 minute time slots, and the last half an hour reserved for Government questions
- from 1.00 pm to 4.30 pm, with the first three hours of the afternoon session reserved for questioning by the Opposition and cross bench, in 20 minute time slots, and the last half an hour reserved for Government questions
- revisit this at 12.00 pm to determine the timing for the afternoon session.

### 2.2 Public hearing: Better Regulation and Innovation

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Hon Kevin Anderson MP, Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation, was admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding the broadcasting of proceedings and other matters. The Chair noted that members of Parliament swear an oath to their office, and therefore do not need to be sworn prior to giving evidence before a committee

The Chair also reminded the following witnesses that they did not need to be sworn, as they had been sworn at another Budget Estimates hearing for the same committee:

- Ms Emma Hogan, Secretary, Department of Customer Service
- Mr John Tansey, Executive Director, Regulatory Policy, Department of Customer Service
- Ms Rose Webb, Deputy Secretary and Commissioner of Fair Trading, Department of Customer Service
- Mr Terry O'Brien, Director, Office of Racing, Department of Customer Service
- Mr Peter Dunphy, Executive Director, Compliance and Dispute Resolution, Department of Customer Service.

The following witness was sworn:

- Ms Meagan McCool, Director, Hazardous Chemical Facilities and Safety, SafeWork.

The Chair declared the proposed expenditure for the portfolios of Better Regulation and Innovation open for examination.

The Minister and departmental witnesses were examined by the committee.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mookhey: That the afternoon session for the examination of the portfolios of Better Regulation and Innovation occur from 1.00 pm to 4.30 pm, with the first three hours reserved for questioning by the opposition and crossbench and the last half hour reserved for Government questions, and that the Minister be invited back for questioning from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

The public hearing continued.

The Minister withdrew at 2.02 pm.

Mr Graham tendered page 25 of the Report of the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, entitled 'Victorian Cladding Taskforce', relating to the audit of Victorian Government buildings.

Mr Mookhey tendered an improvement notice from SafeWork NSW.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 3.59 pm.

The public and media withdrew.

### 2.3 Tendered documents

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Graham: That the committee accept and publish the following documents tendered during the Better Regulation and Innovation hearing held on Monday 16 March 2020:

- page 25 of the Report of the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, entitled 'Victorian Cladding Taskforce', tendered by Mr Graham.
- an improvement notice from SafeWork NSW, tendered by Mr Mookhey.

### 3. Inquiry into the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion

#### 3.1 Report deliberative date

Resolved on the motion of Mr Mookhey: That consideration of the Chair's draft report, entitled 'Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion', be deferred from Friday, 20 March 2020, and an alternative date for the report deliberative be determined by the committee.

#### 3.2 Reporting date

Resolved on the motion of Mr Graham: That the reporting date for the inquiry into the Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion be extended to 30 June 2020.

### 4. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 4.05 pm, *sine die*.

Sarah Dunn/Joseph Cho/Allison Stowe  
**Committee Clerk**

### Minutes no. 23

Thursday, 2 April 2020

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and Customer Service  
via teleconference, 10.00 am

#### 1. Members present

Ms Boyd, *Chair*  
Mr Banasiak, *Deputy Chair*  
Mr D'Adam (*substituting for Mr Graham*)  
Mr Fang (*substituting for Mr Farraway*)  
Mr Farlow  
Mr Mallard  
Mr Mookhey

#### 2. Electronic participation

Resolved on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That the draft minutes for meeting no. 23 be circulated to members electronically and be confirmed by members by agreement via email.

#### 3. Previous minutes

Resolved on the motion of Mr Mallard: That draft minutes nos 16, 18 and 22 be confirmed.

#### 4. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

##### **Received:**

- 9 December 2019 – Email from Ms Laura Strawbridge to the committee, regarding the conversion of the Sydenham to Bankstown line.
- 12 February 2020 – Email from Mr John Austen to the committee, providing further evidence to the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion inquiry.
- 20 February 2020 – Correspondence from Mr Rodd Staples, Secretary of Transport for NSW, in response to committee request for information: document entitled 'NSW Medium Term Rail Development Plan – Suburban & Intercity 2017'.

- 26 February 2020 – Email from Mr Roydon Ng, Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line, to the committee, providing further evidence to the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion inquiry.

***Sent:***

- 10 January 2020 – Email from the secretariat, to Mr Roydon Ng, providing video footage of his appearance at the public hearing held on Wednesday, 6 November 2019.
- 10 February 2020 – Correspondence from the Chair, to Mr Rodd Staples, Secretary, Transport for NSW, requesting information: document entitled 'NSW Medium Rail Development Plan – Suburban & Intercity 2017'.

Resolved on the motion of Mr Fang: That the committee authorise the publication of correspondence from Mr Roydon Ng, Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line, dated 26 February 2020, with the exception of identifying information and potential adverse mention regarding third parties, which is to remain confidential.

## **5. Inquiry into the Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion**

### **5.1 Submissions**

***Public submission***

The committee noted that supplementary submission no. 30b was published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee.

***Submission to be considered for confidentiality (as identified by the secretariat)***

Resolved on the motion of Mr Mallard: That the committee authorise the publication of submission no. 102a, with the exception of identifying information and potential adverse mention regarding third parties, which is to remain confidential, as per the recommendation of the secretariat.

***Attachments to submissions***

Resolved on the motion of Mr Mallard: That the committee authorise the publication of the following documents, referred to in the report:

- Submission 51, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, Appendix 1
- Submission 62, Inner West Council, Appendix 1 and Appendix 2
- Submission 81a, KOAS (Keep Our Area Suburban), Attachment G

### **5.2 Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions**

The committee noted that the following answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions were published under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee:

- Answers to questions on notice, Mr Matthew Hounsell, received 16 December 2019
- Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, Transport for NSW, received 8 January 2020.

### **5.3 Consideration of the Chair's draft report**

The Chair submitted her draft report entitled '*Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion*', which, having been previously circulated, was taken as being read.

#### **Chapter 1**

Mr Mallard moved: That paragraph 1.17 be amended by omitting '\$15.5 billion'.

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question resolved in the negative.

Resolved on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That paragraph 1.17 be amended by inserting at the end: 'However, this amount was contested by the NSW Government.' [FOOTNOTE: Evidence, Budget Estimates 2019-2020, The Hon. Andrew Constance, Minister for Transport and Roads, 11 March 2020, pp 12-18]

## Chapter 2

Mr Mallard moved: That the following paragraph 2.35 be omitted:

'The committee also received evidence that previous comparative assessments did not support conversion of the T3 Bankstown Line. For example, Mr Hounsell drew the committee's attention to the 2009 *Metro Network Strategy – Corridor Assessment Report* which 'assessed strategic corridors identified previously by the department'. Mr Hounsell informed the committee under this assessment, conversion of the Bankstown line to metro was not supported:

Sydney Metro assessed strategic corridors identified previously by the department then scored the corridor's suitability for investment based on need, possible patronage, and city shaping opportunity. Sydney Metro rightly excluded those corridors where the load could be handled by improving the existing railway.

Sydney Metro ... concluded that the Bankstown Line did not merit conversion to a metro.'

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Mallard moved: That the following paragraph 2.42 be omitted:

'However, some stakeholders questioned the comparisons to international jurisdictions. For example, Mr Austen, who reflected on the implications of the poor decisions of the Paris Metro, stating:

The inquiry should not underestimate the gravity of the situation Sydney and NSW now face as a result of the Metro decisions to date.

The decisions will permanently divide and reinforce geographic inequities in Sydney.

They will reduce access of most people in the metropolitan area and beyond to central Sydney much as the similar Paris Metro decisions did from the late 19th century in that city. The inquiry should note the efforts of the French Government over the last sixty years to attempt to remediate that unfortunate legacy.'

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Fang moved: That paragraph 2.42 be amended by inserting 'unsupported' after 'Mr Austen, who,'.

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Mallard moved: That the following paragraph 2.51 be omitted:

'Some stakeholders were concerned about this approach. For example, the Marrickville Residents' Action Group stated:

Part of the NSW Governments strategy has been to link residential up-zoning along rail corridors in order to fund rail projects. If the process becomes distorted and the conversion of rail lines, or the selection of routes or location of stations becomes a matter of how to deliver profitable projects to major corporations, rather than the provision of the best, most needed rail services to make Sydney a 30 minute city then there is a problem.'

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question resolved in the negative.

Resolved on the motion of Mr Mallard: That the secretariat prepare a new paragraph after paragraph 2.51 quoting evidence received from the NSW Government regarding transport network planning and land use, which is to be circulated to members electronically and confirmed by members by agreement via email.

Resolved on the motion of Mr Mallard: That the following paragraph 2.53 be omitted:

'EcoTransit Sydney was also concerned that the location of stations along the line is being determined by potential development opportunities and not existing transport need.'

Mr Mallard moved: That the following paragraph 2.116 be omitted:

'Both the Hurlstone Park Association and Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance pointed to the 'negative cost-benefit' of the Newcastle light rail project and the city east light rail cost 'blow out', to explain why people are concerned about the cost of the Metro Southwest project and the government's management of it.'

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Mallard moved: That paragraph 2.120 be amended by omitting at the end: 'the privatisation of the line was an area of concern for other stakeholders'

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question resolved in the negative.

Resolved on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That paragraph 2.120 be amended by inserting 'operation of the' before 'line was an area of concern'.

Mr Mallard moved: That paragraph the following 2.122 be omitted:

'Several inquiry participants pointed to the private operation of bus services in Sydney and rail networks in Newcastle and Melbourne as examples where 'private operation has not worked'.

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Mallard moved: That the following paragraph 2.140 be omitted:

'Some stakeholders also felt that gaining access to information about the project has been difficult. Dr Marie Healy, Committee member, Hurlstone Park Association, commented:

Unfortunately, the Government has been so secretive about this project that we have had to get a lot of our information from the media. We heard from about previous rail executives speaking against some of the Government's justifications. So it is very difficult for us to believe the Government when we hear so many counterarguments. The Government redacts all of its feedback and business cases. There has been so much secrecy that we are really distrustful of the justification. ... we really do not have the facts.'

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Mallard moved: That the following paragraph 2.151 be omitted:

'The committee does not believe that the NSW Government has won community support for the Metro Southwest project. The case and rationale for conversion of the line to metro has not been adequately made out and has failed to convince affected communities of the purported benefits for the T3 line or the wider network.'

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Mallard moved: That the following paragraph 2.156 be omitted:

'The committee questions whether the NSW Government, in making the decision to convert the Sydenham to Bankstown line, has put undue weight on the purported benefits of privatisation to the short-term financial position of the government over and above the long-term interests of commuters in having affordable and accessible public transport across all areas of Greater Sydney.'

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Mallard moved: That the following paragraph 2.158 be omitted:

'It also recommends that for projects with private partners, the NSW Government ensure that it outlines more explicitly its assessment of the benefits of privatisation in comparison with a project which would result in the relevant public transport assets and services being held in public hands.'

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Mallard moved: That the following recommendation 2 be omitted:

**'Recommendation**

That the NSW Government ensure that any future projects with private partners outline more explicitly the benefits that the government foresees from privatisation in comparison with a project which would result in the relevant public transport assets and services being held in public hands.'

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Mallard moved: That the following paragraph 2.160 be omitted:

'Consequently, the committee recommends that the Metro Southwest project not proceed, leaving the Sydney Metro to terminate at Sydenham. The committee further recommends that project funds are instead spent on connecting new communities to rail services and improving existing rail services (for example, through digital signalling).'

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Mallard moved: That the following recommendation 3 be omitted:

**'Recommendation**

That the NSW Government not proceed with the Metro Southwest project, leaving the Sydney Metro to terminate at Sydenham, and that project funds are instead spent on connecting new communities to rail services and improving existing rail services (for example, through digital signalling).'

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question resolved in the negative.

### Chapter 3

Mr Mallard moved: That the following paragraph 3.48 be omitted:

'While noting that crowding levels were a 'contentious issue', Mr Wardrop expressed the view that the claimed capacity of metro would result in crowding levels that exceeded what he considered to be appropriate. He explained:

... It is thus suggested that Level of Service E, at four persons per square metre, be taken as the practical limit on how crowded a peak hour train should be throughout its length. This level of crowding would leave some space for passengers to filter through when entering or exiting a train.

... It should be noted that [Transport for NSW] TfNSW has claimed a capacity of 1200 passengers in a metro train, which is approaching lift-like crowding [Level of Service F (five persons per square metre)]. This raises questions as to how metro station stops might be managed when passengers have difficulty filtering through on-board crowds.'

Question put and negatived.

Mr D'Adam moved: That the following new recommendation be inserted after paragraph 3.136:

#### **Recommendation X**

That the NSW Government restore regular direct services to the city via Lidcombe for those stations west of Bankstown affected by the conversion.

Mr Mallard moved: That the motion of Mr D'Adam be amended by omitting 'restore' and inserting instead 'investigate the restoration of'.

Question on the amendment of Mr Mallard put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Noes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Question on the amendment resolved in the negative.

Original question on the motion of Mr D'Adam put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam, Mr Mookhey.

Noes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow, Mr Mallard.

Original question resolved in the affirmative.

Resolved on the motion of Mr Mallard: That recommendation 6 be amended by inserting 'Sydney Metro and' after 'That'.

Mr D'Adam moved: That

- The draft report, as amended, be the report of the committee and that the committee present the report to the House;
- The transcripts of evidence, submissions, pro formas, tabled documents, answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, and correspondence relating to the inquiry be tabled in the House with the report;
- Upon tabling, all unpublished attachments to submissions be kept confidential by the committee;
- Upon tabling, all unpublished transcripts of evidence, submissions, tabled documents, answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, and correspondence relating to the inquiry, be published by the committee, except for those documents kept confidential by resolution of the committee;

- The committee secretariat correct any typographical, grammatical and formatting errors prior to tabling;
- The committee secretariat be authorised to update any committee comments where necessary to reflect changes to recommendations or new recommendations resolved by the committee;
- The report be tabled by Thursday, 9 April 2020.

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd, Mr D'Adam and Mr Mookhey.

Noes: Mr Fang, Mr Farlow and Mr Mallard.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Resolved on the motion of Mr Mallard: That dissenting statements be provided to the secretariat by 5.00 pm, Monday, 6 April 2020.

## **6. Conduct of the inquiry into the operation of the Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016**

### **6.1 Proposed timeline**

Resolved on the motion of Mr Banasiak: That the committee adopt the following timeline for the administration of the inquiry:

- Submission close: End May 2020
- Hearings (one hearing date, one reserve date): TBC
- Report tabling: End October 2020

### **6.2 Stakeholder list**

Resolved on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the secretariat circulate to members the Chairs' proposed list of stakeholders to provide them with the opportunity to amend the list or nominate additional stakeholders, and that the committee agree to the stakeholder list by email, unless a meeting of the committee is required to resolve any disagreement.

### **6.3 Online questionnaire**

Resolved on the motion of Mr Mallard: That an online questionnaire be conducted, and that draft questions be circulated to the committee via email for approval, with a meeting called if members wish to discuss in detail.

## **7. Adjournment**

The committee adjourned at 11.50 am, *sine die*.

Allison Stowe

**Clerk to the Committee**

## Appendix 4 Dissenting statement

**Hon Shayne Mallard MLC, Liberal Party**

**Hon Scott Farlow MLC, Liberal Party**

**Hon Wes Fang MLC, The Nationals**

Government members are strongly in disagreement with the report of Portfolio Committee 6 into the Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion. Specific factual objections are listed below.

Government members are of the opinion that this inquiry chaired by the Greens and dominated by Green, Cross Bench and Labor Opposition members was never intended to look objectively into the issues of public transport infrastructure and investment in NSW and in particular the integrated conversion of the heavy rail line from Sydenham to Bankstown to modern driverless metro rail systems.

It was clear from the outset that the underlying issue for the Labor Opposition and Greens as well as protest groups that they had evidently coordinated, was the approach of the Liberal Nationals government to deliver decades long overdue public transport infrastructure and reform through private sector partnerships and investment. The key evidence of that was Labor's enthusiastic adoption of the report and the recommendation to cancel the project.

This was one of Labor's key policy for the 2019 state election and clearly rejected by the people of NSW who still recall in great disgust Labor's 16 years wasted in government and Labor's failure after repeated promises to reform and deliver public transport infrastructure in the state.

Rec	Government MPs Position
1	The Sydney Metro City & Southwest final business case summary is publicly available on Sydney Metro's website.
2	The committee has either fundamentally misunderstood or actively ignored the structure of the project, notwithstanding repeated attempts by Government Members and witnesses to clarify this point. It is not and has never been a privatisation.  All Sydney Metro infrastructure (like the stations, trains and railway tracks) will be owned by the NSW Government. A private operator will operate and maintain the network.  Sydney Metro uses Opal ticketing and fares are set by the NSW Government, the same as the rest of the Sydney public transport network.
3	At the 2019 State Election, NSW Labor took to the voters of NSW a commitment that if NSW Labor were elected, NSW Labor would cancel the Sydney Metro City & Southwest project – and in doing so cut thousands of jobs which the project has and will continue to create in NSW.  The NSW Liberals and Nationals went to the 2019 State Election reaffirming its commitment to continue to deliver this city-shaping infrastructure project. NSW Labor lost the election. The NSW Liberals & Nationals were returned.

Rec	Government MPs Position
	<p>The absolute farce that is the recommendations of this inquiry to cancel the project flies in the face of one of the marquee election commitments which the NSW Government took to the election. We are delivering on this commitment.</p> <p>The T3 Bankstown Line is more than 125 years old. Upgrading the T3 Bankstown Line to metro standards between Sydenham and Bankstown increases the frequency and capacity of rail services, while also ensuring the line is fully accessible.</p> <p>Southwest Metro will enable services every 4 minutes in the peak, with ultimate capacity for a metro train every two minutes. Some stations along the T3 Bankstown Line currently have a train every 15 minutes in the morning peak.</p> <p>Over the three-hour morning peak, Sydney Metro will be able to move 51,000 people in each direction on the T3 Bankstown Line – that's an extra 15,000 more people than now.</p> <p>All stations will be fully accessible, with lifts and level access between trains and platforms, and platform screen doors for extra safety and security.</p> <p>It is not a matter of one or the other. The NSW Government is also investing over \$4.3 billion in the More Trains, More Services Program which delivers 41 new trains, the single largest uplift in services in the State's history, new infrastructure and digital signalling on the Sydney Trains suburban rail network.</p>
4	<p>During the planning approval process Sydney Metro consulted with thousands of community members and other stakeholders. Following the consultation for Sydney's Rail Future in 2012, Sydney Metro has been engaging with the community along the T3 Bankstown Line since 2015 – two years before the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) went on exhibition.</p> <p>Sydney Metro had 17 community information sessions, distributed 150,000 newsletters, handed out over 38,000 flyers at stations, and project engagement material has been translated into seven languages other than English.</p> <p>Sydney Metro has read and listened to all the feedback received about the project. And as a result of feedback, they significantly changed the design. The revised project, which was approved a year ago, addressed the issues and significantly minimised impacts – particularly in respect to vegetation, construction noise and traffic impacts.</p> <p>The Sydenham to Bankstown conversion is the result of an extensive process of engagement, analysis and development which stretches back many years.</p>

