

**From:** [Julianna Walton](#)  
**To:** [Portfolio Committee 6](#)  
**Subject:** CM: Re: Inquiry into the Privatisation of bus services – Post-hearing responses – 3 May 2022  
**Date:** Friday, 6 May 2022 11:23:05 AM  
**Attachments:** [Transcript 3 May 2022 - UNCORRECTED - \(1\)with JW corrections.pdf](#)  
[Action for Public Transport Submission Eastern suburbs bus changes.docx](#)

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Thanks Emily,

A couple of small corrections - annotated transcript attached.

Also attached is our submission on the eastern suburbs bus changes, which may be of interest.

Regards,  
Julie Walton  
Convenor



**Action for Public Transport  
(N.S.W.) Inc.**

P O Box K606  
Haymarket NSW 1240  
30 March 2020

The Secretary  
Transport for NSW  
PO Box K659  
Haymarket NSW  
Submitted via <http://transportnsw.info/>

Cc The Hon Andrew Constance  
Minister for Transport  
Parliament House  
Sydney 2000

## **Submission on Eastern Suburbs bus system changes**

### **Who we are**

Action for Public Transport (NSW) ("APTNSW") is a transport advocacy group active in Sydney since 1974. We promote the interests of beneficiaries of public transport; both passengers, and the wider community.

### **Key points**

As they stand, the proposed changes to the eastern suburbs bus system would in many cases:

- Increase waiting times and total travel times
- Increase walking distances for passengers
- Leave significant destinations poorly serviced and less accessible

These outcomes are at odds with strategic directions on climate change and city planning, as well as with the TfNSW motto “we put the customer at the centre of everything we do.”

The government recently announced a proposal to continue the West Metro from the CBD through to Randwick and Kingsford, with a spur line to Malabar, which we applaud (*South-East Sydney Transport Strategy August 2020*). Major changes to the bus system should be postponed until passengers have the opportunity to interchange with both light rail and metro.

## **Starting point**

The EIS for the CBD and South East Light Rail (CSELR) (Volume 2) noted the strength and importance of the existing bus system serving Sydney’s South-Eastern suburbs:

*Outside of the CBD the proposed CSELR project will operate through the South Eastern suburbs where buses are currently the primary public transport mode. This corridor is within Transport for NSW’s Metropolitan Bus System Contract (MBSC) Region 9 which is the most heavily patronized bus region in the Sydney metropolitan area (p.60).*

APTNSW would support changes to that system if, and only if, they constitute an improvement, and meet the promise made on the TfNSW website to “put the customer at the centre of everything we do”. As they stand, however, the current proposals would not meet these benchmarks in many respects. We believe a substantial reconsideration is in order.

## **Strategic Context**

Any move that discourages the use of public transport is contrary to the strategic directions indicated in critical government policies and plans.

### *Climate change*

Carbon emissions from transport are second only to those attributable to energy production. The State’s Climate Change Policy Framework, with its target of zero net emissions by 2050, is intended to set NSW up as a leading and competitive low-carbon economy.

The Minister recently announced the progressive electrification of the public transport fleet, and we congratulate him for this. Realistically, it will be many years before the private vehicle fleet follows suit. Maximising patronage on public transport therefore remains central to the task of reducing CO2 emissions.

### *City shaping*

Future Transport 2056 and its companion documents (Greater Sydney Services and Infrastructure Plan, Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan, Greater Newcastle Future Transport Plan) recognise the strategic role played by public transport in

shaping cities and making them work efficiently. Future Transport 2056 notes that “Transport for NSW aims to increase the mode share of public transport services and reduce the use of single-occupancy vehicles”(p.47).

The Strategy proposes to completely alter the way in which frequency is addressed. The Greater Sydney Services and Infrastructure Plan proposes to deliver services and infrastructure that enable 30-minute access to the nearest Metropolitan City Centre or Cluster – in the case, the Harbour CBD (Sydney CBD).

(<https://future.transport.nsw.gov.au/plans/greater-sydney-services-and-infrastructure-plan>)

In August 2020 the *South-East Sydney Transport Strategy* was released. It says on p.1:

*The Strategy has translated the City Shaping and City Serving corridors in Future Transport 2056 into potential future networks for detailed investigation and economic assessment. The Strategy also recommends land use and policy opportunities to drive more sustainable movements and more successful places.*

An important element of the Strategy is the proposal to continue Sydney Metro West from Hunter St in the CBD through to Randwick and Kingsgrove, with a spur line to Malabar. APTNSW fully supports this proposal, which would link two major hospital precincts and many employment centres, and make them accessible to people living across a large segment of Sydney.

### **Forced interchanges**

The proposed changes would move the bus system away from providing direct connections to the CBD, relying instead on interchanges with a smaller number of CBD bound bus routes and with light rail (at Randwick and Kingsford). For example, the 390X would go to Bondi Junction instead of straight to the city; city-bound passengers would have to interchange at Kingsford.

### *Grids and webs*

APTNSW appreciates that interchanging between vehicles cannot be entirely avoided in highly developed urban public transport systems. The secret to catering for diverse trip patterns is to increase the coverage of the public transport network, design it as a web of interconnecting routes, and run services at high frequencies<sup>1</sup>. This maximises access from any point to any other point on the web (a modified grid), and creates “network effects” (higher patronage across the whole network). This is the underlying system design principle for the very popular Metro Bus system. It is also how exemplary systems such as those found in Paris and Tokyo work.

The absolute need for high frequencies, indeed very high frequencies, must not however be overlooked. European and Japanese systems offer high frequency to high frequency,

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Jarrett Walker, *Human Transit* 2012; Paul Mees *Transport for Suburbia* 2010

under cover transfers, including at night. These are not “nice to have” features; they are fundamental elements of these systems.

### **Long waiting times and journey times**

*A public transport system reliant on transfers must offer turn up and go frequencies all day and well into the evening, every day. Otherwise, waiting times and total journey times will blow out and deter patronage.*

The map of the proposed new system classifies routes bus routes as “frequent” if they run every 20 minutes.

This is certainly at odds with passenger experience. It is also at odds with the draft Greater Sydney Services and Infrastructure Plan (p.7), which quite rightly does not portray a service every twenty minutes as “frequent”. It says:

*‘Turn-up-and-go’ services are planned on both city-city and centre-centre corridors. This means that once customers reach their nearest main station or stop on a trunk corridor, they will not have to wait any longer than 5 minutes across the day and in the evenings.*

*For people living within ~10km of our Metropolitan Centres as well as on local corridors, customers will have access to high frequency services (at least every 10 minutes) that will enable them to reach their nearest Strategic Centre within 30 minutes or to connect to a nearby trunk corridor, where they can continue their journey.*

This table (Figure 22) appears on p.46 of the Draft Greater Sydney Services and Infrastructure Plan.

<b>Service type</b>	<b>All day frequency</b>
<b>City-city</b>	<b>Turn-up-and-go (&lt;5 mins)</b>
<b>Centre-centre</b>	<b>Turn-up-and-go (&lt;5 mins)</b>
<b>CBD mass transit</b>	<b>High frequency (&lt;10 mins) or on-demand</b>
<b>Local</b>	<b>High frequency (&lt;10 mins) or on-demand</b>

Even if the interchange is with light rail, the current changes mean there is still scope for waiting times and journey times to become longer, because the light rail system is not “turn up and go” beyond Moore Park. From that point the service runs at 8-minute daytime headways and drops back to 15-minute headways on Sundays and public holidays.

### **Long walking distances**

The progressive elimination of bus stops to accommodate left hand turns by general traffic (much of it single-occupant) has increased walking distances across the Sydney bus system. It has also made interchanging more difficult.

An example can be seen at Elizabeth St in the city, which suffered a wholesale removal of stops a few years ago. Recent changes to the bus network have left passengers using Victoria Rd services with a walk of several blocks to a bus stop where they can transfer to a bus serving destinations on the eastern side of the city.

This situation will worsen if the Eastern Suburbs bus system changes proceed, leading to fewer buses running on Elizabeth St.

### **Poorly served destinations**

The proposed changes would lead to big gaps in service coverage, leaving significant destinations much less accessible by public transport. Bunnerong Rd would have no services, leaving people needing to attend services or visit graves at the cemetery with no option but private transport or taxis (which many will find beyond their means).

South of Maroubra Rd there will be no direct services to the CBD except the X buses, which run along Elizabeth Street. There is no indication that these services would be extended to run all day.

Light rail does not run anywhere near Taylor Square, Oxford St, Albion and Foveaux St. These are important precincts, which include St Vincent's Hospital and its associated medical facilities.

The Moore Park area is on the light rail route, but there are considerable distances between light rail stops, and not enough stops in the area to provide comparable levels of accessibility. There is only one light rail stop at Moore Park and, surprisingly, there is no stop where the Randwick and Kingsford lines meet.

### **West Metro extension**

As noted earlier, the South East Sydney Transport Strategy (August 2020) includes a proposed extension of the West Metro from city (Hunter St) through to Randwick and Kingsgrove, with a spur line to Malabar. Depending on the exact route adopted, and the spacing of stations, this could overcome the problems evident in the proposed reconfiguration of bus routes outlined in this submission. Passengers currently using buses would have the opportunity to interchange with either light rail or metro at a number of potential hubs.

APTNSW believes that major changes to the eastern suburbs bus system should be considered in conjunction with consideration of the Metro route, as well as consideration of with light rail services. This would be entirely reasonable and consistent with Future Transport 2056, which foreshadowed service changes to connect to new train lines. At the moment, the proposed changes are premature.

It may not be too late to make provision for a rail station box to serve Prince of Wales hospital and UNSW in the course of the construction works underway. As well as the possible future metro, we note that the rails at Bondi Junction station extend almost 200

metres past the station, just 3.1 km short of the hospital. There is great scope for service integration in the longer term if this opportunity is taken now.

## **Conclusion**

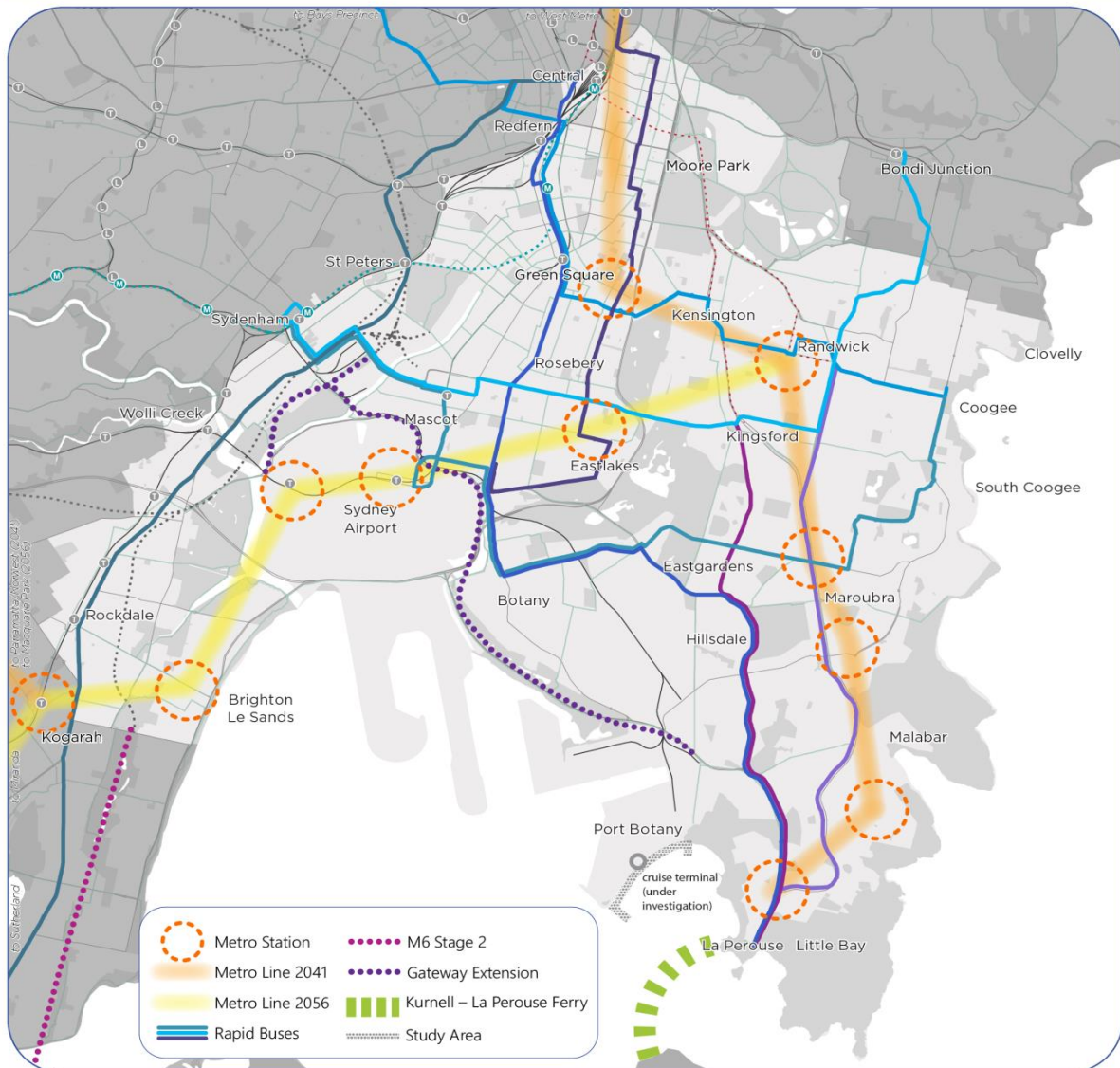
APTNSW is grateful for the opportunity to comment on proposals to radically alter the Eastern Suburbs bus system. We hope to see the proposals withdrawn and reworked, in conjunction with firm plans to extend Metro West across the Sydney CBD to Randwick and Malabar.

Jim Donovan

Secretary

**South East Sydney Transport Strategy 2020 p.9**

## Preferred Scenario



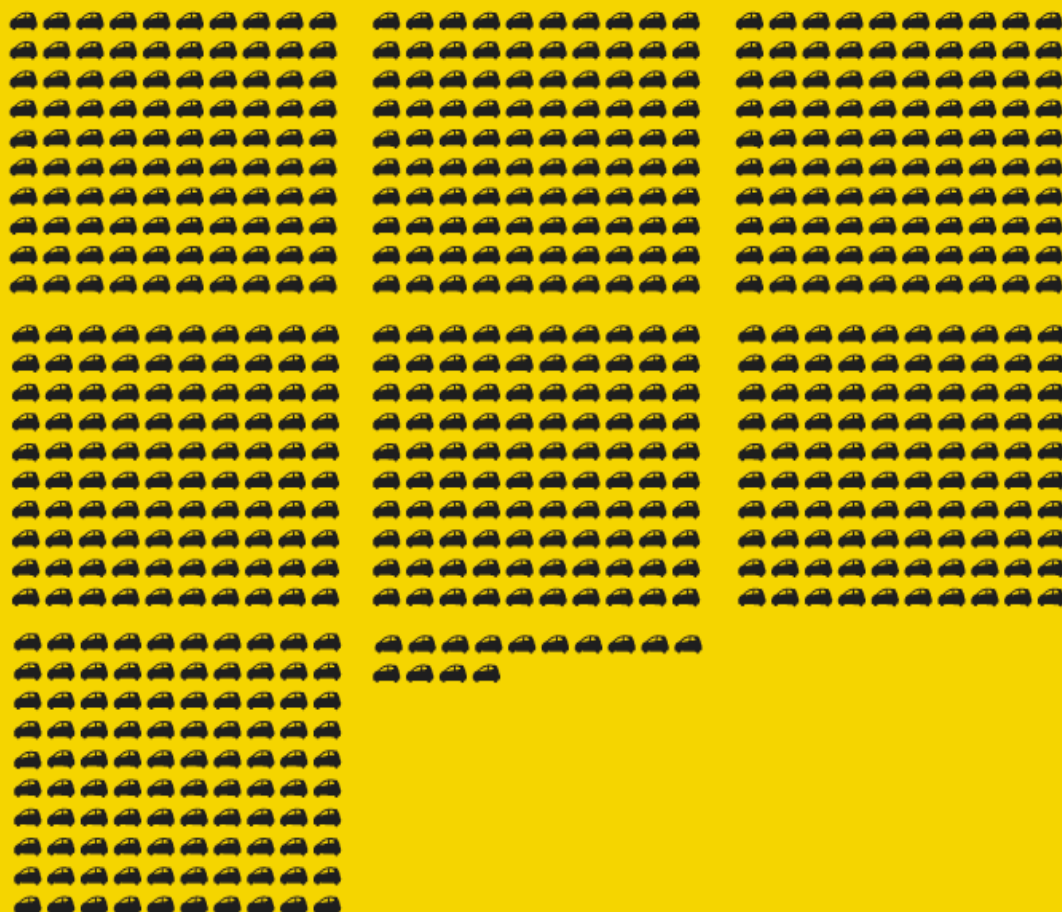
## Initiatives for Investigation - subject to business cases and investment decisions

- 8 Rapid Bus Routes
  - Railway Square to Sutherland Hospital (via Princes Highway)
  - Eastern Harbour City CBD to La Perouse (via Green Square and Eastgardens)
  - North Sydney to Mascot (via Green Square)
  - Bondi Junction to Sydenham (via Randwick and Mascot)
  - Randwick to La Perouse (via Anzac Parade)
  - Kingsford to La Perouse (via Bunnerong Road)
  - Coogee Beach to Bays Precinct (via UNSW and University of Sydney)
  - South Coogee to Sydenham (via Sydney Airport)
- Delivery of the Principal Bicycle Network
- Sydney Metro West extension to Malabar/La Perouse
- Sydney Gateway Extension to Port Botany
- Metro from Kogarah to Randwick



# 4 ways to move 1,000 people

714 cars\*



15 buses



4 light rail vehicles



1 x 8-carriage train



\* based on average light vehicle occupancy of around 1.4 (taken from the 2012/13 Household Travel Survey published by Bureau of Transport Statistics)