

**INQUIRY INTO REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND
A GLOBAL SYDNEY**

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 5 June 2017

Partially
Confidential

Greg Pearce MLC
Chair State Development Committee
www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/statedevelopment

Development of a West of the Divide (WOD) Website

16-3-17 Another tunnel for Sydney today at \$77 mil. Sydney really is suffering from overcrowding and those in Parliament in the majority making the decisions are all from east of the divide (EOD). Sydney is becoming a rabbit warren of expensive tunnels in an attempt to alleviate congestion. Also today the SnowyHydro announcement. \$2 bil for 3 tunnels under the KNP to solve the energy crisis.

Solution: One tunnel from Penrith to Lithgow and a super fast train from Central to Bathurst 1 hour. This would be the relief valve for all those “trapped” EODers in Sydney. (Reminiscent of the early 1800's breakout to west past the Blue Mountains barrier)

How many solar farms with battery storage to the west could be built with the billions spent presently alleviating congestion. Fast links to WOD would attract industry and provide sustainably cheaper energy for smart manufacturing while providing cheaper housing and a happier lifestyle,

Intro - This proposal began with the idea of giving the West of the the Divide (WOD) people of NSW a common powerful voice. I believe to achieve this we need to have a big picture, a vision, a paradigm shift of where we would like to go. That can be achieved only if we are united - politically, economically, ethically.

The basic idea is to maintain a steady, not growing, national population where growth would come to the WOD from attracting people from East of the Divide (EOD). I want to emphasise “attracting” as opposed to regulating or subsidising people to WOD. I think this proposal looks at that old nut in a refreshing new way.

Politically

It would begin by standing candidates in the upper house for the 2018 NSW elections. It would be a one issue WOD party aiming to unify all those disaffected with “politics as usual” from the major parties and the greens on the left. It would attract those who are sick of paying the higher fuel prices WOD regardless of how long and loud we have wined in the past. The absence of or lack of adequate communications WOD even when Nationals and Liberals and Labour promise otherwise and greens don't have the numbers to make a difference. We have to be unified and numerous to achieve a WOD majority of seats and therefore influence parliament to invest in or facilitate the proposed infrastructure WOD needs.

Disrupt the status quo and let the rest of NSW know we mean business.

The WOD party would also be a popular choice for EOD's who would love to “get out of the rat race” but can't for work, finance, education reasons.

Then if successful we stand candidates for the Senate in the next Federal election to facilitate federal infrastructure funding.

Economically It would be possible for WOD's to be numerous enough to agglomerate a bulk purchase, under a legal structure probably a WOD Co-op for fuel, coms services, energy security etc. This would achieve autonomy in energy supply and use more cheaply. Also to achieve more security in the marketplace by creating a single desk WOD enterprise for selling produce, energy etc. Even to the extent of creating a “free trade” type structure to exist only within the WOD area. Like a rewards or loyalty card system.

It would be possible for eg. the WOD Co-op to purchase all fuel for WOD. This would be railed to Bathurst where it would be broken up and distributed by rail to the 4 regions (see below). WOD's co-op members who are reward card holders would purchase via locally owned distributors and use

their credits to claim fuel or other co-op products.

Establishment of a WOD bank ("BankWest") as was in the past the Rural Bank. Could invest in public housing and infrastructure.

3-4-17 Price Disparity on energy - Presently WOD energy is largely transported from EOD which places WOD enterprise at an unequal price point disadvantage due to transport cost. (In Tumut it's hard to fathom the additional price payed there with the cost of transporting fuel). If WOD adopted a radical plan to draw from it's greatest advantage, solar energy, to largely replace traditional energy this would address the existing inequality against WOD enterprise. Solar furnaces, electric transport road and rail. Most enterprise occurs during daylight hours which is the peak solar production period. A win/win. For the lesser industries battery backup and smart technology could fill the gaps.

Ethically

Social Housing - Respectful and supportive of those who are unable to manage.

Housing Affordability - There is nothing more pressing EOD than housing affordability particularly amongst the youth. This is largely a supply and demand issue with price being the limiting factor. WOD could offer cheaper housing plus a less congested and more relaxed paced lifestyle. WOD could offer everything a city person likes, sophistication, diversity, rounded education, while adding cheaper housing, better quality lifestyle, cleaner air, cheaper energy etc. Ethnically Diverse, A culture of good old country respect and friendliness.

Environmentally sustainable.

Socially Diverse ie. in support of same sex marriage.

Culturally Diverse ie. inclusive, respectful and supportive of first peoples views, opinions and advice as well as supporting multi-culturalism.

The 4 Regions

WOD would be divided into:

Nothern Region of which Armidale - Tamworth (AD) would be the hub or capital

Central Region Bathurst - Orange - Lithgow (BOL) would become the eastern capital of WOD

Western Region Dubbo (DUB) would be the hub or international outback capital of WOD

Southern Region of which Wagga - Albury (WA) would be the hub or capital

Resources

Solar:

This is one of the main pillars of the sustainability of WOD. Our transport (electric trains, busses and cars), industry, identity, and attractiveness to new settlers would be the cheapness and availability of solar. As the effects of climate change becomes more challenging solar energy will be relied upon more to mitigate those effects. WOD has by far the most in exposure and the most reliable solar energy resulting in unlimited growth potential as energy requirements transition from coal. Why produce it at Nyngan and transport EOD when it could be utilised locally more efficiently and cheaply.

Infrastructure

Transport:

The **twin cities** WOD "capitals" would be linked; Armidale to Tamworth (111 klms), Bathurst to Orange to Lithgow (119 klms), Wagga to Albury (145 klms) by a frequent (5 return trips per day)

fast solar/electric train. To link cities within each region offers not only **economies of scale** for **developing markets** and **more competition** supplying those **bigger markets** but also **synergies** for cultural and leisure pursuits and health (particularly specialist health).

WOD Centres of Excellence would compete with EOD institutions in education (including developing technologies), theatre, specialised health (recently exposed as wide differences in costs for the same service) and recreation. WOD would be seen as being just as sophisticated as EOD but with a better quality of life and lifestyle.

Armidale - Tamworth (AT) Northern Regional Capital (pop 87,795). Presently 6 hrs 21 by train Tamworth to Sydney via Newcastle. To re-route the train from Willow Tree to Merriwa through or under Goulburn River NP then to Rylestone then to Lithgow would focus this Region more to the west particularly for international travel.

Dubbo, Western Regional capital (pop 40,975) would become a hub for international travel. An **International airport (DUB)** would be established cheaply (greenfield site) and would be cost competitive and infinitely easier and cheaper to access particularly for long term parking and o/n accommodation than the EOD alternatives.

Incoming international travellers would be attracted by the ease of access to the “outback” for Indigenous cultural experiences, Wilcannia, Broken Hill and the vast natural and recreational opportunities in between.

Outgoing international carriers may pick up from Dubbo originating from Adelaide heading NE, Melbourne heading N or NE or from Sydney heading W. Regional Victorians may also find Dubbo International an attractive alternative due to reduced flying times. Regular smaller flights would link Dubbo with Broken Hill and Bathurst.

Bathurst - Orange - Lithgow (BOL) the Central Regional Capital (pop 103,722) would become the catchment for all WOD's Regional travellers for non-stop easy access from Bathurst to Sydney. Frequent fast (3 return per day) XPT style (but electric) trains would leave Bathurst and arrive at Central in the heart of the City of Sydney (presently the Bathurst Bullet 4 hrs with less stops might get to 3 hrs. This could become the “Bathurst Rocket” with magnetic levitation and a tunnel through the mountains on a dedicated line to Central with stops only at Penrith and Parramatta taking one hour.) This facilitates for those WOD's who presently have to access Sydney either by long drawn out car based travel across the City and the worry, expense and inconvenience of parking. Or for Northern Region car based travellers having to negotiate the divide to the coast, the Pacific freeway then across the City.

The Melbourne to Sydney XPT would be re-routed from Wagga via Cowra to Bathurst (518.2 klms, by bus presently 6½ hrs). While the present distance of the train Wagga via Goulburn to Sydney is 469.7 klms (7 hours by train), the fast Bathurst to Sydney leg would make the journey significantly quicker.

Bathurst would also be the fast 'Escape' to the west of all EOD's wishing to access the whole WOD catchment. Particularly the cheaper more laid back International Airport at Dubbo.

The Bathurst Rocket if stopping at Penrith and Parramatta would facilitate those in western Sydney getting to the city centre fast.

Wagga - Albury (WA) the Southern Regional Capital and by far the biggest (pop 235,500). As the XPT fleet are to be renewed this Capital with its combined resources could utilise (recycle adaptively re-use/convert to electric the old xpt trains to instigate the first of the electric fast intercity link trains (5 returns per day).

Very Fast Train Melbourne to Brisbane - The link between Wagga and Albury above equalises the benefits of this service as the VFT will only stop in one or the other of these cities. The VFT should go via Dubbo however as this links the international airport at Dubbo which would also

provide an air freight outlet for value added primary product and smart (solar) WOD manufacturing.

Inter-Regional Rail Transport (IRRT):

For people - This system would primarily be used for WOD regions wishing to access Sydney via Bathurst and EOD visitors wishing to access Dubbo via Bathurst for International travel.

For product/freight - Bathurst would become the intermodal hub for the catchment of WOD product destined east to Sydney and as a catchment for value added WOD product to the intermodal International Air Freight Hub. The Central and Western Region catchments would access the Very Fast Train hub at Dubbo. Probably a once return service per day.

As regional population centres grow, bigger markets would require local rather than EOD value added product.

AT to BO (Armidale to Bathurst 508 klms, Tamworth to Bathurst 400 klms)

DUB to BO (Dubbo to Orange 145 klms), (Dubbo to Bathurst 200 klms, presently 3 hrs by train)

WA to BO (Wagga to Bathurst 314 klms, Albury to Bathurst 459 klms)

WOD Advantages

WOD has:

Cheaper and more abundant energy - By far the most in exposure and the most reliable **solar energy** resulting in unlimited growth potential as energy requirements transition from coal. Why produce it at Nyngan and transport EOD when it could be utilised locally more cheaply.

Happier Workers - An unreferenced job satisfaction study shows WOD workers are happier.

Broken Hill with it's best quality "super grade" highly concentrated iron ore 70% Fe. Using technology being developed by Victoria's Swinburne University Professor Geoff Brooks and Dr Ben Eckman to produce concentrated solar power (CSP) producing temperatures capable of smelting. Broken Hill has solar energy and iron ore both highly concentrated. With some infrastructure development funding Broken Hill could also value add with it's "pure iron" image.
The Conversation June 29 2016

Dubbo would become WOD's First Peoples Cultural Capital - A First Peoples University would become the educational focus after appropriate consultation and approval of the relevant elders and community members. Also a First Peoples TAFE teaching the applied and craft skills including cultural tourism.

Cheaper housing including closer proximity to semi-rural lifestyle. "The reality is that in a post-industrial society, most of the economic growth and most of the well paid jobs are to be found in city centres. So people need either to live close to those centres or to be able to get there efficiently. Professor Peter Phipps (SU); "The thing that's very different about Australia, on a world scale, is that we have really rapid population growth in our cities. The rate of growth in Sydney and Melbourne is probably double what it is in most world cities and that's put continuous pressure on (house) prices. He says a key to affordable housing is transport policy, to link cheaper houses to jobs. Reserve Bank Governor Philip Lowe suggested "The best new assets to create in our country at the moment are infrastructure assets, particularly in transportation networks. It is probably the best housing affordability policy - investment in transportation infrastructure." [Quotes taken from The Saturday Paper March 11-17, 2017: The Truth about House Prices by Mike Secombe.]

Cleaner air

More space - The biggest bug bear for car based travellers is parking in proximity to where you want to go. EOD's pay big dollar for this and only the rich can afford it creating unethical/social issues and discontent. WOD can alleviate this. The complexities and massive cost of **Badgery's Creek Airport** would be superfluous if the Bathurst Rocket (see above) was built instead. Penrith would be the midway point between Sydney and Dubbo international airports servicing all NSW. Alleviating pressure on Sydney International.

More space and **cheaper real estate** for greenfield development.

A secure **Refuge** from rising sea levels

A more attractive and cheaper alternative to managing congestion EOD.

WOD Disadvantages

WOD hasn't got much water.

Centres of excellence would be established for smart design and manufacturing of water saving and water efficient products.

The Bathurst Rocket Maglev train would be the first project in this proposal.