

**Submission
No 51**

INQUIRY INTO SYDENHAM-BANKSTOWN LINE CONVERSION

Organisation: Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce

Date Received: 2 October 2019

Ms Abigail Boyd MLC

Friday 27th September 2019

Chair

Portfolio Committee No. 6
Legislative Council
NSW Parliament
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Ms Boyd

The Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Committee's Inquiry into the Sydenham-Bankstown Line conversion.

The Chamber is delighted that the NSW Government has chosen to invest in a substantial upgrade of the public transport available to the Canterbury and Bankstown area. As Sydney's population continues to grow, the businesses and residents in 'middle-ring' suburbs cannot aspire to a vibrant economy without the frequent, reliable mass transit that metro promises. No part of Sydney deserves to be locked out of the opportunities provided by an increasingly global city. The conversion of the Sydenham to Bankstown line to provide frequent and reliable services will for the first time allow, for example, Bankstown workers to attend Macquarie Park by public transport. We hope that in future metro can be extended from Bankstown to Liverpool with a station at Bankstown Airport. We also support the vision for a mass transit line, potentially a metro, from Norwest via Parramatta and Bankstown to Kogarah, outlined in the NSW Government's transport plan, *Future Transport 2056*.

Introduction to the Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce.

The Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce was established with the major objective of furthering the economic development in the Canterbury Bankstown region and beyond.

Our aim is to provide the business sector in the region with a common voice, which will listen to local business needs, advance their interest and to support our community sectors through direct advocacy to encourage local investment.

The chamber works closely with local Council, State and Federal Representatives, and key Stakeholders focusing on real issues that are affecting growth in our region. We seek to redirect public and private sector investments to our region, support projects on easing traffic congestion, encourage corporate presence, and lobby for a reduction in red tape.

Based upon the terms of reference Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce submits the following:

A) Whether metro is a suitable means of transport over long distances.

Metro style rail services operate in many cities around the world, providing a radial rail network over similar distances to Sydney. Many of the world's most populous cities have metro systems which move large numbers of people comfortably and reliably over comparable distances to the Sydney Metro network. Examples include Singapore, Hong Kong, Paris, Seoul, Taipei and London.

The Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce is a strong supporter of the Sydenham to Bankstown conversion. By providing a metro service which is independent of the Sydney Trains network, service reliability and frequency will be significantly increased. This offers the potential to support productivity and attract additional employment to the area.

B) The consultation process undertaken with, and the adequacy of information given to, community, experts and other stakeholders.

Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce notes that more than 400 submissions were made during the EIS process. The Chamber understands the Sydenham to Bankstown proposal was advertised and assessed according to the requirements that apply to all State Significant Infrastructure projects.

Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce (then known as South West Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, hosted the Premier of NSW, the Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP, at which the Premier spoke extensively with more than 400 people present about the metro project.

<https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/the-express/gladys-berejiklian-promotes-benefits-of-sydney-metro-to-bankstown/news-story/27d6edef454b7764f76493467a0d38fd>

C) The adequacy of temporary transport arrangements during the conversion process, including for people with a disability.

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.

D) The impact on the stations west of Bankstown.

Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the Sydney Metro being extended beyond Bankstown in the future. We note that since the government's decision to convert the Sydenham to Bankstown line to metro, there have been a number of significant decisions that could encourage the NSW Government to extend metro beyond Bankstown in the future. In early 2018 the Greater Sydney Commission released its plan for *A Metropolis of Three Cities*, which designated Bankstown as a Strategic Centre.

Bankstown is well on the way to growing its offering as a strategic centre.

- The University of Western Sydney is building a campus opening in early 2022 which is expected to house 7,000 students a few years after opening.

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/newscentre/news_centre/more_news_stories/world-class_campus_for_bankstown_cbd

- The NSW Government has committed to rebuilding Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital. [https://nsw.liberal.org.au/candidates/gladys-berejiklian/news/articles/\\$1-3-BILLION-FOR-BANKSTOWN-LIDCOMBE-HOSPITAL](https://nsw.liberal.org.au/candidates/gladys-berejiklian/news/articles/$1-3-BILLION-FOR-BANKSTOWN-LIDCOMBE-HOSPITAL) Planning and early works construction is expected to begin during this term of government.
- The Greater Sydney Commission also identified Bankstown Airport trade gateway as an economic catalyst for the area. <https://www.greater.sydney/south-district-plan/productivity/jobs-and-skills-%C2%A0-city/growing-and-investing-health-and-education>
- Finally, The Greater Sydney Commission also identified Bankstown as an emerging Health and Education precinct. <https://www.greater.sydney/south-district-plan/productivity/jobs-and-skills-%C2%A0-city/growing-and-investing-health-and-education>

For these elements of the Greater Sydney Commission's plans to be fully realised, the Canterbury Bankstown Chamber believes it is important that the metro be future-proofed to extend beyond Bankstown. Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce believes the Greater Sydney Commissions plan for the Bankstown area justify a metro station at Bankstown Airport as part of an extension of the metro service from Bankstown to Liverpool.

E) Other comments

The Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce supports undergrounding the current Bankstown rail line through the commercial centre of Bankstown. We have presented this view to government consistently since the project was announced. Please see attached are a chamber Media Release of 26 July 2018 and an article was published in the local news May 9, 2018. 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.

Yours Faithfully

Wally Mehanna | CEO

W: www.cbchamber.org.au