

**Submission
No 63**

INQUIRY INTO SYDENHAM-BANKSTOWN LINE CONVERSION

Name: Mr Brian Hudson

Date Received: 4 October 2019

Sydenham – Bankstown Line Conversion Inquiry
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sydenham – Bankstown Line Conversion Inquiry:

I oppose the downgrading of the T3 Bankstown Line including the Metro Southwest project between Sydenham and Bankstown.

It is important for the Inquiry to be aware that the downgrading of the T3 Bankstown Line has severe consequences on communities from the Inner West to South West Sydney.

Metro Southwest contains a significant number of issues such as:

- The NSW Government's refusal to release the full business case for the project. The refusal to provide justification for the wastage of billions of taxpayer dollars. How many meetings have Government Ministers had with the developer MTR as the Metro line will be sold to them
- More cost effective and less disruptive alternatives have been ignored including digital signalling upgrades for the Bankstown line trains network that delivers a higher frequency of service (train every 3 minutes) compared to Sydney Metro (train every 4 minutes) for T3 Bankstown Line
- A lack of empirical evidence supporting the need to downgrade the T3 Bankstown Line, especially as the NSW Government's Sydney Rail Future plan state that the "Western and North Shore Line" are the key bottlenecks (not Bankstown)
- Most commuters being forced to stand for long distances with Sydney Metro having 70% less seats compared to the existing double-deck Sydney Trains service. How are the elderly, young families with prams or those needing to use wheelchairs going to cope - how can they be evacuated in cases of emergency (tunnels too narrow)
- The loss of drivers and guards on trains resulting in delays and slower response times to emergency incidents. The Metro in Hong Kong have now decided to employ staff on their trains
- The NSW Government's failure to heed warnings from four former rail executives about the loss of the Sydney Trains network "relief valve" and the overall reduction in reliability. How did these rail executives keep their jobs for so long, if the NSW Government would not listen to their opinions.
- The downgrading of the T3 Bankstown Line in being used as a gateway for privatisation of infrastructure, significant over-development and severe destruction of heritage suburbs, such a change of use of railway land from public to privately owned transport, could impact on the heritage significance of the railway line
- A serious lack of transparency in planning and delivery of the project with many important documents being held back from public access including the cost of "Sydenham to Bankstown"
- The NSW Government abusing of the spirit of the GIPA Act (freedom of information) as a revenue raising mechanism to impede on access to information
- An inadequate Temporary Transport Plan created without the promised public consultation and released "several years" late, that also fails to guarantee 100% accessible services
- Many thousands of commuters forced onto crowded bus services during the downgrading of the T3 Bankstown Line (construction of Metro)

- Permanent disconnection from the City Circle (Town Hall, Wynyard, Circular Quay, St James, Museum) and the Inner West (St Peters, Erskineville, Redfern [& Sydney University]). In relation to Redfern, where thousands get off on a daily basis, these additional numbers, that need to make another train trip, are not factored in any reports on customer usage of Sydney train services
- 9 stations west of Bankstown lose all trains to City, forcing 19,000 commuters to interchange twice (Bankstown then Sydenham or Central), having suffered the loss of the Inner West Line (City to Liverpool [& Bankstown loop] via Regents Park, let alone access the City Circle stations
- The lack of detailed information provided generally and the lack of consultation with all communities impacted especially west of Bankstown (e.g. Cumberland LGA)
- The NSW Government's regular attempts to mislead the public and media into believing that the entire T3 Bankstown Line is being converted into Sydney Metro by making referrals to the project as an "upgrade of the Bankstown Line" without always specifying "between Sydenham to Bankstown" in an attempt to cover-up the impact on non-Metro stations (i.e. west of Bankstown and east of Sydenham)

Additionally, there is the real threat of Canterbury Racecourse being sold in the near future, there have been public statements (SMH 18 Feb 2014, where the ATC made submissions to the review of Racing NSW Thoroughbred Racing Legislation in 2014 in their 36 page report which contained a section titled the " Disposal of Canterbury Park Racecourse" . The nearby suburbs cannot cope with the traffic now and social infrastructure is at breaking point. The land size is 35ha. Imagine how many high rise buildings containing thousands of apartments that developers could put on that land size. The ATC is currently trying to get a DA approval, which will allow the ATC to sell some land to Mirvac, which currently has a " Development Delivery Agreement " with the ATC on this land (in pg 41 of the in 2017 ATC Annual Report). Mirvac has already paid the ATC over \$ 8m, which has spent the great majority on helping to build a car park at Randwick racecourse.(in pg 9 of the 2018 ATC Annual report)

Glossy pamphlets do not replace public consultation. The public has basically been left in the dark over anything to do with this massive waste of public monies. There is enough anxiety and sense of helplessness in our communities without this adding to it.

I urge the committee to review these concerns and to stop the downgrading of the T3 Bankstown Line in order to protect the surrounding communities from over-development.

Why destroy a functional rail line, they should be providing rail services to suburbs who do not have reliable transport options

I consent to the full publication of this submission.

Yours Sincerely,

Brian Hudson