

**Submission  
No 100**

## **INQUIRY INTO SYDENHAM-BANKSTOWN LINE CONVERSION**

**Organisation:** Marrickville Residents Action Group

**Date Received:** 13 October 2019

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## **LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL - Inquiry into the Sydenham-Bankstown Line Conversion**

### **PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE No 6 – TRANSPORT & CUSTOMER SERVICE**

*Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and concerns to the Inquiry into 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. Please see below our “Summary”, “Outcomes sought from the Inquiry” and “Addressing the Terms of Reference”.*

*Yours,*

*Heather Davie,*

*Convenor, Marrickville Residents' Action Group*

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#### **Summary**

Whilst there were positive responses to community concerns and changes in the Preferred Infrastructure Project in 2018, relating to heritage station buildings & platforms, retention of station entrances, retention of tracks, small reduction in loss of vegetation, reduced closures of the lines and less disruption there are still major flaws in the project.

The projected cost of \$11B TO \$12.5B was not reduced despite changes to construction. Considering cost blowouts for other recent infrastructure transport contracted projects (City to Eastern Suburbs light rail, Newcastle light rail & West Connex) what will the final cost be? Request to obtain total cost through GIPA has been refused.

There is no confidence that the 2024 deadline will be met, considering the delays on the above projects and the complexity of the conversion works.

The question still remains if the Sydenham to Bankstown Metro is value for taxpayers' money, replacing one train with another, whilst other areas of Sydney need new public rail lines? Residents in country NSW have lost services over the years and country trains are in poor condition. Surely the money would be better spent upgrading the current network

Public infrastructure is greatly needed and should be encouraged and sustained, especially considering potential population growth. Generally the community is supportive

even when there will be significant imposts, however the proposed South West Metro line is not such a case. This part of the Metro will not be a new rail line. Rather it is the conversion of an existing world class service that will miss the opportunity to extend Sydney's rail network or upgrade the current one.

This conversion will come at a high price. This price includes years of disruption, chaos and loss due to the nature and impact of the extensive works, at least 100,000 commuters impacted by temporary transport arrangements during at least five years of rail possessions, loss of heritage and character of historical suburbs, environment issues such as loss of urban canopy and biodiversity and disruption will cause economic and financial hardship to business along the line. Added to this is "value capture" & "transport orientated development" as seen in planning for and development of residential towers along the Northern Metro and community concerns of massive overdevelopment as outlined in the Sydenham/Bankstown Urban Renewal Strategy. Although planning around railway stations has been given back to local councils The Greater Eastern Sydney Planning Authority still promotes higher densities around railway stations which will have a major impact on heritage and character of suburbs along the corridor.

Residents along the line do not think that the pain of this project is worth the gain to the community. Of the 549 submissions to the 2017 EIS only 17 - 3% were supportive of the project. (P6, part B, Submissions Report, 2018).

Destroying an existing line to build a driverless Metro squanders the opportunity to extend Sydney's transport network. "Any new system needs to add value by adding existing capacity, NOT by taking away part of the existing network in the name of progress" (Page A2.2 Letter 3 July 15 from Rail experts John Brew, Ron Christie, Bob O'Loughlan & Dick Day)

Inner West Council motion July 24, 2018 states "That council reiterates our view that the case for the Sydney Metro Sydenham to Bankstown has not 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."

Finally the Government has ignored concerns of experienced rail executives such as John Brew, Rob Christie, Bob O'Loughlin and Dick Day ( letter of July 2015) who have rejected claims that Metro will 1.Reduce congestion on the rail network by 60%. 2 Increase the number of trains entering the CBD in the morning peak from around 130 to 200 trains per hour and 3. Increase the number of commuters by 1000,000 per hour in the morning peak.

Indeed they argue that "these band-aid measures are a waste of scarce public funds because announced proposals do not add value or resolve the long term network capacity problems." (Page A2.4letter 3 July 15)

The former Rail executives express concern that "The removal of heavy rail will cause major disruption to the efficient operation of the network and reduction in network flexibility & reliability, creating problems as The Bankstown Line acts as a relief line for Western, South West and South Line during times of major disruption.(Page A2.5)

In Paris plans to extend their Metro have been abandoned for double decker trains.

The governments of Hong Kong and Singapore have announced recently that they are replacing driverless metros with train drivers due to inefficiencies. South China Morning Post (19/9/2019) reported Metro derailment of three carriages in Hong Kong with eight passengers injured. This is a very serious situation for automated trains without driver or guard and confined egress in tunnels. Why is our government pursuing Metro conversion when other countries are abandoning them?

## Outcomes sought from Parliamentary Inquiry

1. That construction contracts should not be signed until completion of Upper House Inquiry
2. That the committee recommend that the T3 conversion not proceed due to multiple negative impacts, including waste of scarce public funds, costs, lack of transparency and genuine consultation & democratic decision making, lack of good governance, loss of reliability of Sydney trains network, unsuitability of Metro for long journeys, loss of heritage, character and livability impacts for communities along the corridor..
3. That alternate Metro route be investigated and recommended from Sydenham.
4. That should the Metro go ahead, a full heritage/character appraisal of the corridor is completed before the project goes ahead. The Department of Planning and Environment has stated that local character is to be respected and enhanced (Circular PS-001 dated 16 January 2018).
5. Should the Metro be approved an embargo should be placed on planning “upzonings” and medium/high rise development until after the completion of the Metro Line and other infrastructure needed for increased population densities is in place.
6. That the government release the full business case to justify the Metro and the cost benefit analysis, as recommended by the Productivity Commission.
7. That the government consults early with communities regarding station precinct design. This has been promised but has not yet eventuated.
8. That the government guarantee that promises made in the PIR especially in relation to preservation of railway heritage are honoured and not resisted from should design difficulties present themselves. This includes preservation of station buildings, platforms, station entrances and booking offices.
9. That heritage impacts are to be considered in the station precincts and surrounding areas rather than limited to the project area.
10. The project should address in detail the existing flood risk & anticipated flood management system requirements to service future catchment conditions” and that “Flood management should not rely on existing informal storage.as advised by Sydney Water (7.2.2)
11. The franchising to a private operator should not be supported as it has not worked in Newcastle or Melbourne and should not be implemented for the Metro.
12. There needs to be much more genuine consultation and co-operation with State planning, local councils and communities along the corridor at planning stages.
13. Expert advice and concerns from experienced Rail experts should be listened to and acted upon in order to build the best Sydney network, without wasting money.
14. It is perfectly feasible for the Metro line to stop north of Sydenham station and not impact on the Sydenham to Bankstown line. There have been suggestions for extending the line from Sydenham through the airport, down the Ramsgate Peninsula and over Taren Point Bridge into Cronulla OR from Sydenham via the airport to Matraville, Yarra Bay or Malabar OR through Hurstville to Miranda and possibly replacing the M6 proposed freeway through the National Park. All options need to be considered. Our present Hub and Spoke rail network prevents Sydney from developing into a “30 minute City”. This city requires a network of Metros criss crossing the city between heavy rail, not replacing it.

## Customer Service Concerns

These are some of the concerns were raised by the community throughout the various consultation processes.

1. Claim that Metro is needed in order to upgrade stations with lifts and create better access, however upgrades have been undergone in a timely fashion along all other train lines without the expense or disruption of The Metro.
2. Design of Metro described as having a mix of seating and standing, however the majority of the passengers will be standing with a reduced capacity from 896 to 378
3. Claim that Project is customer focussed is not accepted considering complete disregard for aging population, extended families travelling with young children and customer comfort with passengers forced to stand over long distances.
4. Claim that trip will be more comfortable, however not if you are elderly, short statured, tired, pregnant, not physically able to hold on whilst standing, travelling with young children or unwell and have to stand all the way from any station to the city or to stations along the Northwest Metro or on the journey home you will not consider your trip as comfortable. Manners/courtesy regarding Priority seating have been long forgotten.
5. Capacity levels quoted would be extremely uncomfortable, based on "crush capacity" in Tokyo with pushers to get people onto trains. The actual capacity does not take into account back-packs, baby back-packs, luggage, people on mobiles, bikes & prams.
6. Claim that Metro will provide better access to Education facilities is not correct as there is no stop at Redfern for Sydney University. Students and staff will have to back track after interchanging. Younger students travelling to school will be faced with interchanges rather than direct route.
7. On Metro trains there are only 2 multipurpose areas for prams, luggage and bicycles, whilst on current trains there are 2 per carriage and they are very congested on weekends when extended families travel to the city.
8. Commuters are concerned that the initial use of 6 carriage trains will create overcrowding and that overcrowding will continue to be a problem as population densities increase along the line. With 2026 passenger demand forecast of daily customer movement of 23,800 for Bankstown, 13,800 for Punchbowl, 11,400 for Wiley Park, 14,800 for Lakemba, 13,00 for Belmore, 13,800 for Campsie, 14,200 for Canterbury how much space will there be left for the 14,200 for Canterbury, 9,400 for Hurlstone Park, 13,800 at Dulwich Hill, 13,800 for Marrickville and unknown number at Sydenham and Waterloo?
9. Travel time reductions are not believable considering that commuters west of Bankstown, may have several train changes, and any commuter going to Circular Quay (a popular work, family, ferry, Art Gallery, Rocks, Cruise line and Opera House stop) may have difficulty walking 800 metres from Martin Place. Passengers from Marrickville to Central would save up to 4 minutes, however if they needed to change trains for a city circle train their 4 minutes would be quickly lost.
10. Commuters west of Bankstown are effectively being told to go backwards to Cabramatta & interchange for trains to the city. Their travel times will definitely not be improved and increase by need for several interchanges.
11. Terminating a train at Bankstown will involve a major operational change.
12. From 6 of the 9 stations west of Bankstown travel times will increase for trips to city with interchanges for Bankstown Metro, possibly Sydenham or Central for city access.

13. 9 Stations west of Bankstown will lose all direct city trains & 19,000 commuters will face interchanges. This number will increase dramatically as population densities increase in the south western suburbs.
14. 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 a long periods of time adding to the stresses of daily life
15. Claim that Metro will create a more modern service could be easily fixed with removal of battered old dirty rolling stock & replacement with more modern comfortable Waratah trains and improved signalling system (as has been mooted for two other lines)
16. Chapter 11 P.16 EIS Road Network Claim that the “enhanced customer service provided by the Metro, including travel time savings is expected to result in growth in the use of rail services. This increased growth would potentially result in a reduction in the dependence on motor vehicles as the primary travel mode in the study area.” This assumes that everyone will be travelling in a North /South direction, an assumption that cannot be made. If trains are overcrowded or residents work east or west of the line and suburbs have to be crossed then car usage will probably continue to be high and the statement that “ introduction of the Metro would benefit local communities by providing a viable alternative to the car with benefits for the local road network.” may not be realised.

## **Addressing the Terms of Reference**

### **A) The adequacy of the business case and viability of the Metro**

The summary business case, released in 2016 for the Sydney and Southwest Metro is a seriously flawed document and should be the subject of a detailed investigation by your inquiry. The full business case has not been release and redacted numbers in the business case make it impossible to determine how cost benefits have been calculated. The business case appears to have grossly over-inflated benefits and under-estimates the costs.

The business case articulates just under \$13billion of economic benefits for the project. Assuming the Metro extension will cost \$12b, this represents a benefit cost ratio of barely 1:1- not 1.53:1

Peter Martin, journalist and ex Treasury official has highlighted internal Transport for NSW emails from an analyst complaining that business cases were as good as completed without access to the numbers. Martin also notes the questionable types of “benefits” used to inflate positive cost benefit ratios including patronage, time savings and travel time reliability in addition to being selective about the proposed transport project. (smh.com.au/opinion/the fake economics cookbook-how to make bad transport projects look good 20171122gzqd3xhtml) The Metro City and Southwest contains all these faults which need your further investigation.

In May 2017 additional analysis was undertaken on the overall Sydney & Southwest for Infrastructure Australia. This analysis is not public and is subject of a current GIPA inquiry and needs further investigation.

## **Flawed analysis from 2016 business case.**

### **The 2016 business case offers some ambitious revenue figures on rail patronage and development**

The forecast rail network demand figures are across Sydney and come with the caveat that line by line growth may vary considerably (Page 37)

How reliable then is the prediction that 100% of operating costs for Metro City & Southwest will be covered by fare revenue. (Page 93) Fare revenue doesn't cover 100% operating costs for train lines in North America, the UK or Europe. For Sydney the figures are much lower with just 27% of operating costs covered by fares and other charges making the business case assumptions unrealistic.

The Metro business case includes \$3.1b in stamp duty (Page 89) at Net Present Value over the 38.5 year project. This figure is from a time when the NSW Government was actively promoting ambitious housing targets through the Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Corridor, yet there has since been a significant downturn in housing approvals making the stamp duty target questionable.

### **Contingency/Risk Management**

The Productivity Commission 2017 five yearly review identified that major infrastructure projects have an average 26% cost blow out. If a likely cost of \$15b is used for Metro then the cost benefit ratio becomes negative.

A cost of \$15b may be conservative as recent experience with Sydney Light Rail costs almost doubling. The Sydney Light rail is also notable for the mis-pricings and omissions in the business case, which may well have been prepared by the same team responsible for the Metro.

### **Impacts of rail line shutdown**

Business case (page 71) claims that disruption impacts of shutting down the rail line for commuters will be just \$14m based on 38.7 million trips which values the inconvenience of these trips as just 36 cents per trips. This devaluates the Bankstown line commuters and underlines the contempt shown for them.

If trips are delayed by 30 minutes and you value the amount of time as half the average hourly rate of \$38.30 then a more realistic impact figure is \$735 million. If 15 minute delay (unlikely) the amount of disruption would still be \$367million.

### **Road travel time savings**

The business case outlines a range of benefits from the Metro relating to alleged road travel times savings. This includes \$1.4b in "improvements in road user travel times" and \$350m due to "reduction in vehicle costs for road users" for existing residents (page 710 and a further \$319m for "improvements in road user times" and \$178m for reduction in vehicle costs for future residents (page 72)

However there is no available public evidence to suggest there will be road travel time savings as a result of the introduction of the Metro and in fact it is very possible that road traffic time will get worse. Factor in increased road activity of workers coming to the corridor, road disruption during construction, traffic congestion and delays with alternative transport arrangements and dramatic proposed increase in population growth. This would indicate that the above alleged road benefit is false

### **Increased accessibility between origins and destinations**

The business case claims \$1,863m in benefits to travel time savings as a result of Sydney Metro City & Southwest however this is incorrect.

Sydenham to Bankstown commuters will lose direct access to 21 stations as a result of being cut out of the Sydney Trains network.

Loss of direct access to Circular Quay will impact on many. Changing trains or walking 800 metres from Martin Place will be time consuming and inconvenient for many.

Time consuming problems will arise from loss of direct access to Redfern Station and Sydney University, direct access to stations west of Bankstown, including Lidcome and access to Sydney Olympic Park.

More than 19,000 commuters using eight stations west of Bankstown will lose direct access to city and be forced to change trains (maybe twice) to reach City circle destinations. All above losses will increase travel times, causing inconvenience and reduced service levels for communities along and west of the corridor.

Commuters will gain access to 19 new stations however many of these stations are in the north west of Sydney, which will have limited benefit for Bankstown line commuters.

In July 2015 former executives of State Rail and Rail Corp, John Brew, Ron Christie, Bob O'Loughlin and Dick Day outlined the inconvenience to passengers west of Bankstown as one reason against the Metro rail operation. In addition they argued that services on the Illawarra line will be lengthened and inconvenienced as that line will now need to service St Peters and Erskineville.

The Metro will actually have marginal travel time savings and in some cases be slower when it comes to trips to the CBD, in particular into the northern end of Sydney CBD which will require train changes.

The Metro will also be an all stops service which will reduce time travel benefits for the western end of corridor. Fastest train from Bankstown 8:11 am train gets to Central in 27 minutes – one minute quicker than the Metro.

Predicted 20 second dwell time (generally 50 seconds) is very optimistic for busy stations and raises doubts about travel time predictions. Dwell time concerns over safety and separated parents and children on Northwest Metro has alarmed many commuters. Face Book comment this week on Metro Post remarked on fact that only fast people get on before automatic gates closed.

Promise of Trains arriving every 4 minutes has not been realized on Northwest Metro.

Ten minute wait intervals do not worry people who have never had access to trains but would be a reduction in service to Peak hour commuters on the Bankstown line.

Reduced seating on single deck trains would also add to poorer service and longer travel times, if people are not able to board the train due to overcrowding.



## **Infrastructure Impacts**

The business case is happy to consider major benefits in relation to increased development along the corridor. This includes \$1,157m in “city shaping benefits” (more residents and businesses locating along the transport corridor) and \$252 in “land use impacts including “more efficient land use in terms of infrastructure savings, health and sustainability benefits for with more residents and businesses locating along the transport corridor”

However the business case is not willing to count as impacts the cost of delivering additional schools, hospitals, open space and other infrastructure for these increased residents.

## **Safety Incidents and Fencing**

The business case books \$221m in benefits due to economic savings from a reduction in the average number of safety incidents per rail journey as a result of the project having additional features such as platform screen doors” (page 71) and elsewhere touts the improved safety of the new Metro (P57 & p61) The summary financial analysis paints a different picture identifying an increased number of potential safety incidents per year with a dis-benefit (cost) of \$30m. Early indications from the operation of North West Metro support the dis-benefit conclusion as there has been an increase in concerning safety incidents, including underground breakdowns and parents being separated from their children.

If Metro was to be adequately staffed with drivers and guards it would be safer. Increased concern regarding platform incidents is expressed for Metro SouthWest where mechanical platforms will be in use. These have not been used in Australia but need to be because of 11 curved stations. Many other safety/security concerns are explored later in this submission.

It would be good for the Inquiry to investigate the true extent of breakdowns, delays and platform safety incidents on the current driverless Metro trains, From reports in the Media there appears to be an increase in unsafe incidents, particularly parents being separated from their children.

## **Operational Period**

The business case books in “additional” \$285m in “additional value that the projects assets will generate beyond the 30 year operational period in the analysis.” It is not clear what the latter is and further investigation of the claim needs to be researched.

## **Construction Impacts Not Counted**

The business case is happy to promote the benefits of the Metro in operation but is reluctant to acknowledge any negative impacts during the five year construction period and the following construction related costs have not been included and need to be.

- Impacts on businesses during shutdown periods and increased road congestion.
- Reduced workforce productivity due to sleep reduction caused by noise.
- Reduced productivity due to traffic impacts during shutdown periods.

- Reduced learning capacity of local schools due to noise.
- Environmental impacts, including tree removal and loss of biodiversity.
- Impacts on heritage and character as a result of development through “transport orientated development”

As outlined in a recent seminar, there are significant concerns that many benefit cost analysis reports lack any real rigor or professional standards and many are simply made up. This appears to be the case for the City and South-West Metro. It is hoped that the Inquiry will apply rigor to determine the true costs and carefully examine the benefit \$value claims.

## Questionable benefits

The business case offers an extensive menu of high value benefits (P26, P57) with no explanation of how they are costed. Some are questionable.

- What increased “comfort” is associated with only 1 in 3 passengers on a full train having a seat instead of the current 3 in every 4?
- What are the “health benefits” of high density living with limited access to open space, hospitals, schools and community services?

## B) The consideration of alternatives for improving capacity and reducing congestion

A critical issue with the South-West Metro is that the NSW Government will be wasting \$11.5b to \$12.5b to replace one railway line with another, while many under-serviced parts of Sydney are in dire need for new public transport.

The concept of removing the Bankstown line, to build rapid transit Metro, was first floated in a paper called “Sydney’s Rail Future”, released by then Transport Minister Gladys Berejiklian. in 2012. The Illawarra line was also proposed to be subject to this conversion, however the document does not explain why the Bankstown line was chosen.

The document included an extremely limited (3 page) analysis of different strategic alternatives for the Sydney rail network, mainly looking at whether a Metro-style system should be introduced.

In October 2012, the 20 Year NSW State Infrastructure Strategy was released and questioned the decision to run the Metro to Bankstown by stating **“The utilization of rapid transit both south and west of the CBD appears sub-optimal”** considering that **“The Bankstown line only carried 6,600 passengers in the peak hour and the Illawarra Line already had good access to the CBD via The Eastern Suburbs Line.”** **“By Contrast the heaviest traffic flows outside the CBD occur in the six-track Main 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”***

Despite this the concept of converting the Bankstown Line was confirmed in the NSW Long Term Transport Masterplan 2012, without justification and without reference to Infrastructure NSW’s concerns.

In 2014 the NSW Government announced the sale of electricity assets and \$7b was to be allocated to the Metro project without further qualifying any specific benefits of the conversion.

In 2016 in the Business Case Summary the claim was made that the Bankstown Line “adds to Sydney’s big rail bottleneck” and “funnels trains on to The East Hills and Inner West line outside Central and therefore should be replaced by a separate Metro Service. As outlined previously in this paper this business case is highly flawed.

In short there remains a critical lack of analysis of alternative options to the extremely expensive shut down of the Bankstown Line.

In 2015 it has been revealed, four former senior Sydney Trains executives told the government that the Metro to Bankstown was not the answer and did not deal with the issue of highly constrained number of tracks between Sydney and Strathfield. “If the government had spent \$1.7b on upgrading the existing double deck system by improving signaling and providing track amplification at critical pinch points it would have got a better overall result.” The analysis of the four former rail chiefs said. They also expressed concern that the **“takeover” of the existing Bankstown line will remove “the relief valve for the network” and leave “No escape route”.**

**“Any new system needs to add value by adding to existing capacity, not by taking away part of the existing network in the name of progress”** they said.

This has been further supported by an opinion piece in SMH (22/1/2018) by DR Dick Day a retired urban planner and senior manager of Sydney’s rail system. Dr. Day said: **“The Bankstown Line Metro conversion represents a poorly thought out initiative that will incur considerable expenditure and disruption yet is incapable of being used to its full potential to relieve congestion on the network.”**

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 Berejcklyn 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

On March 13, 2019 it was reported in SMH that Sydney’s stretched rail network could carry up to 40% more passengers if its old signalling system was modernized to allow more services. According to Howard Collins (former head of London underground and now Sydney trains chief executive) **“a digital upgrade of signaling system at a cost of \$3b would be the biggest improvement we can make to the capacity of this city in a very short time.” “In London it increased capacity from 3 million to 5million people”** he said

Mr. Collins conceded **“it was not very sexy to sell to the public and politician” an improvement to existing lines – even though it could lead to a train turning up every 2 ½ minutes and enhanced safety-compared with cutting a ribbon on a new rail line”**

**“A digital upgrade to signaling enables trains to travel closer together, thereby increasing frequency. Automating protection systems o trains and tracks is also designed to allow trains to run at higher speeds while improving safety and reliability.”**

**Surely spending \$3b on digitalizing the signaling system would provide much better value for state money and better service across the Sydney train network.**

The T3 line has one of the lowest rates of the lowest overcrowding rates of any Sydney line, so there is no need for a rapid Metro operation. Official statistics from 2015 show that out of 11 suburban lines, the T3 line only rates seventh for average local load factors during the AM peak. The Illawarra, Northern, Inner West and Western lines have far worse overcrowding. (Summary of Train Loads Sept 2015, Bureau of Transport Statistics)

“Matthew Hounsell (Senior Research Consultant Institute for Sustainable Futures at UTS) found that the T3 Rail Corridor is not operating at capacity and should not be a priority) (The Conversation 13/3/2018) He has also commented that Upgrading of the existing line could in fact deliver a high level of service than current service capacity at a fraction of cost of the Metro.

**C) The factors taken into account when comparing the alternatives and the robustness of the evidence used in decision making**

There is no shortage of ways to provide for Sydney’s Rail future or options. Options include, digitalizing the rail signaling system, adding lines to avoid track “pinch points” at Strathfield and Erskineville and building new lines east to west rather than just north south with all lines heading to the CBD. Our present Hub and Spoke rail network prevents Sydney from developing into a “30 minute City”. Sydney requires a network of Metros criss crossing the city between heavy rail, not replacing it.

The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance have always said that the answer lies in building new railway lines to suburbs that don’t currently have them other than converting existing lines in suburbs that already have them.

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.

In 2012 the concept of converting the Bankstown line to build a rapid transit Metro, was floated in NSW Discussion paper called “Sydney’s Rail Future”, released by the then Transport Minister Gladys Berejiklian. There was very little detail on alternatives for the network and it was mainly looking at whether a Metro should be introduced, not where. In October 2017, Infrastructure NSW questioned Sydney’s Rail Future’s decision to run the Metro to Bankstown. It stated:

**“The utilization of rapid transit both south and west of the CBD appears sub-optimal. The current proposal will serve the Bankstown Line, which carries only 6,6000 passengers in the peak and part of the Illawarra line, which already has good access to the CBD via the Eastern Suburbs Line”.**

It contrasted these with the heaviest traffic flows into the CBD which occur on the Main West Lines between Strathfield and Central and concluded there was a “strong market” for rapid transport services through the Inner West. Despite this, in December 2012, the NSW

Long Term Transport Masterplan pushed ahead with the concept of converting the T3 Bankstown line, without justification or reference to Infrastructure NSW's concerns

During the 2019 State Election both major parties supported the Sydney Metro West, dedicating \$3b for its construction (predicted \$18b needed) and made it top priority. The Metro South West is estimated to cost \$12.5b. Previous funds were expected to come from the up-zoning of land along the Sydenham to Bankstown Corridor. The connection between up-zoning development potential along rail corridors is the modus operandi of Hong Kong based MTR Corporation, the company with operating rights for the Northwest Metro. There is fear that the MTR will be given the rights to run the Southwest Metro and control over the development controls over the rail corridor. While there should be a link between transport provision and development density, it should not be the case that transport decisions are made for the purpose of allowing private companies to up-zone densities through indiscriminate overdevelopment of neighbourhoods along the corridor.

The Priority Precinct -Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Project, would have conceded considerable planning control to the NSW Government and away from local councils. A total of 36,000 new homes were proposed along the corridor, 6,000 of new dwellings to be built within 800 metres of Marrickville Station. After a concerted community campaign the Government relented and gave back ostensible planning controls to councils.

The flaws in this developer driven approach can be seen in the decision to select Waterloo, rather than Sydney University/Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (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 and the money that flowed from them.

Jacob Saulwick, SMH Journalist wrote ***“The two options are of Sydney University and at Waterloo. The Sydney University option is understood to be favoured by some transport for NSW bureaucrats, due to the tens of thousands of guaranteed passengers a day. But the Waterloo option is being pushed by the property developer arm of the State Government, Urban Growth NSW as a catalyst for major apartment projects in the area”*** he added, ***“The Waterloo option would also trigger the destruction, but possible replacement of about 2,000 housing commission apartments.”*** (<https://ecotransit.org.au/wp/2015/12/01/sydney-metro-mysterious-flyer-pushes-rail-station-waterloo-sydney-university/>).

There may have been good planning reasons to build at Waterloo, however it doesn't take much imagination to believe that building industry lobby groups would pressure governments to favour station locations that delivered multi-million dollar opportunities for construction contracts. This is especially the case when those who were high up in UrbanGrowth were significant players in the world of corporate construction. CEO Barry Man had a combined 18 year career with Lend Lease and Stockland. (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/your-government/the-premier/media-releases-from-the-premier/barry-man-appointed-urbangrowth-ceo/>) it isn't difficult to believe that the NSW government would want their coffers to keep filling up with stamp duty and other fees as a result of these developments. ([https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/property-slump-weighs-on-state-revenue:estimates/news-story/387a\)f9bc7baa9f74633456678d1bcf7](https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/property-slump-weighs-on-state-revenue:estimates/news-story/387a)f9bc7baa9f74633456678d1bcf7))

Concerns have been raised regarding State finances and the fear still remains that greater density will be needed to pay for the conversion of the heavy rail service to a metro service.

As recently as August the plans for the second stage of the Parramatta Light Rail was put “on the back burner” due to shortage of funds”

The combined effects of the government’s relative impecunity, coupled with the bi-partisan agreement that the Metro West is the priority for Sydney’s rail should be cause for the government to reassess the need for the Sydenham to Bankstown conversion to proceed. The line could terminate at Sydenham.

As with the mooted abandonment of the Parramatta Light Rail- Stage 2, it is perfectly legitimate for the government’s priorities to change regarding the Sydenham to Bankstown line. The parallels between the two projects, where existing heavy rail lines are being cannibalized and converted into another form of rail, would make the de-prioritisation of both, appropriate.

Ironically, 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 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 harbor crossing and new stops in the CBD – (freeing up congestion at Town Hall and Wynyard Stations) and access the Bankstown line as they always had. If the major requirement for improving Sydney’s rail network is to provide greater service to Parramatta via the Inner West then the best way to do that is to build a new line there.

## **D) Whether Metro is a suitable means of transport over long distances**

Simple answer is No when considering loss of seating and distances to be travelled whilst standing.

Expert Rail opinions expressed that:

“Metro expansion should supplement heavy rail, not replace it as metro trains are not suited to long distant journeys serviced by the Sydney rail and other suburban network (P. A2.6 Letter 3 July 2015)

Metro trains are best suited to highly populated, densely populated, densely trafficked areas over short journey times, NOT to long, park & ride journeys ...” (P. A2.2 Letter 3 July 2015)

“At Sydney Morning Herald’s Population summit (Monday 23 September 2019) industry & political leaders urge concentration on building public transport capacity as Sydney plays catch up to the rest of the world”

RTBU NSW Secretary Alex Claassens said “***new systems are needed but Sydney’s multibillion-dollar metro network isn’t the answer. He described the Metro as an ill designed system fundamentally unsuited to Sydney.***”

He expressed concern that “***The low capacity Metro is built for a city like New York where the same number of people get on and off at any given station. Sydney isn’t***

**set out like New York and the vast majority of commuters are headed for the CBD”**  
(Media Release RTBlueexpress.com.au 24.9.19)

Existing double -decker eight car Waratah trains have 896 seats and the new Metro single storied train will only have 378 seats. This represents a 60% reduction in seating per train. Currently 70% of commuters are seated with 30% standing however on the Metro this will be reversed. Despite increased frequency of trains there will be less overall seats available for commuters on the new Metro line when it opens in 2024.

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”

Commuters at Bankstown will see their seat capacity fall from 8,960 to 5,670 per hour.. This raises the possibility that commuters from Bankstown will need to stand for the entire 28 minute journey although this may be offset by the fact that they will be the first on the trains and therefor more likely to get a seat.

Given that Metro services appear to be all stops services the lack of seating will impact heavily on commuters at the eastern end of the line, from Campsie to Sydenham. With current capacity it is often difficult to find standing space at Marrickville during peak hour. With higher population density along the line it may be impossible to board during peak hours.

Some commuters travelling the entire route in peak hour could be forced to stand 66 kms and that is unacceptable. Lack of seating will prevent people from relaxing, reading, computer use, knitting, etc. It will be harder to look after small children, for small statured people and children to hold on and for pregnant women, elderly and disabled to find a seat.

Sydenham/Bankstown T3 line is a well functioning, comfortable, suburban rail service which does not need to be replaced by wasting scarce public funds, replacing one line with another and squandering the opportunity to develop new public transport rail link. Improvements for signaling, accessibility and time- tabling would be more cost effective and offer commuters much more comfortable transport.

## **E) The consultation process undertaken with, and the adequacy of information given to, community, experts and other stakeholders**

In the Minister for Transport 2012 report it stated that discussions had taken place with the community and businesses in relation to the options raised in the possible conversion of the Bankstown line to Metro, however there is no record of any consultation in 2012 or prior to that year.

The consultation process undertaken both for the original EIS for the SW Metro Project (in 2017) and for the Preferred Infrastructure Project (in June 2018) were flawed and highly lacking in adequate time for proper community consultation given the fact that the documents in total weighed in excess of 25 kilograms in hard copy format. The 2018 Preferred Infrastructure Report in 3 volumes was 11cms thick and weighed 7 kilograms. This made accessing the information difficult for many.

Of further concern was the inadequate allocated consultation time for highly technical and detailed documents to be read by lay people.

\$5.5 million was paid to the tenderer – GHD in conjunction with AECOM to prepare these documents for public exhibition. Jodi McKay, previous Labor Transport spokesperson has stated “We are talking about millions of dollars worth of projects and all we have is the release of glossy documents”.

The Preferred Infrastructure Report and Submissions Report was released on 20 June 2018 and the first public consultation session had already been organized and advertised to occur as early as Saturday 23 June 2018 from 10am to 2pm at the Bankstown Arts Centre.

The exhibition period of 4 weeks was to conclude on 18 July 2018, which would not have allowed sufficient time to analyse and digest the 3 volumes. To present these weighty documents to be read, considered, researched well in order to make a well informed submission requires much more time than was granted.

The process to develop a submission is almost as demanding as a university assignment, which makes it difficult for full time employed, time poor parents and those who speak other languages or those that have limited English literacy skills.

Many commuters along the line were completely unaware of the documents and the “consultation” process.

Key stakeholders, such as business operators, directly affected residents within 300 metres of railway stations along the rail line and commuters were not liaised with or consulted and given scant information regarding the impacts of many years of construction and disruption during the conversion, Many commuters along the line are still unaware of the many changes, such as use of single deck 6 car metro train with reduced seating, loss of direct city circle link, loss of access to St Peters, Erskineville and Redfern and loss of drivers and guards.

NSW Department of Planning commented in their documentation on the Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Strategy that “The corridor is highly urbanized and extends through one of Sydney’s most densely populated and ethnically diverse regions.” Extra care should have been taken by NSW Department of Transport to explain to residents, business owners and the commuters the impacts, instead of just providing glossy brochures in English.

The Small Business Package has not been widely promoted and no information exists in relation to the compensation package in terms of funding, guidelines and responsible authority to disperse funds. Major problems for businesses impacted by the Light Rail Project give businesses along the corridor great cause for concern.

There has been no consultation with local schools, P & C & Community groups in relation to the conversion of the line and loss of the City Circle link. Excursions by train are popular in local Public Schools and the loss of direct routes to Circular Quay and Museum will be sorely felt. Direct access to many Museums, Art Galleries, Botanic Gardens Hyde Park War Memorial . Ferries to zoo and other City attractions will be difficult or nigh impossible. Changing trains and “loading”/unloading” large groups of children onto or off a Metro train will be difficult with a 20 second dwell times and no guard to make sure everyone is safe.

Residents in the local Government Area of Canterbury Bankstown are amongst the highest users of public transport in the metropolitan area and should have been widely consulted. Important to note that many extended families use the line to access the city on Sundays and it will be difficult for them to board and alight within the 20 second dwell time.



Commuters and residents from the stations west of Bankstown were not consulted about the project from its inception and it has been up to community groups with limited resources to inform local communities of the project and the major impacts of changes for commuter on future rail travel.

Community information sessions such as those in Town Halls, community festivals and the Royal Easter Show are not consultation.

These sessions provided glossy marketing rather than substance and have been inadequate.

Visitors to these sessions are presented with pre-defined options, everything decided through top down decisions and there is no genuine sharing of ideas..

Visitors who do question aspects of the project are usually lectured on what is “right” about the project – This is not consultation.

Community sessions have been poorly attended due to limited notice and timeframes and due to previous experiences at such sessions and the knowledge that you will not be listened to nor your concerns taken seriously.

Measuring success by numbers of encounters and lack of engagement with communities along the corridor and beyond give communities little hope for meaningful consultation in the future.

**It appears that many issues raised by interested parties who made submission to the EIS in 2017 and to the Preferred Infrastructure Report in 2018 have remained unanswered or have been given scant/dismissive and or little explanation post exhibition.**

Although some changes were made to the original project exhibited in 2017 the overall effect of the project in terms of environment, social impacts, loss of heritage, costs, wasteful use of limited public funds and lack of credible justification for project remain as major concerns

The project now just ploughs on sending emails and letterbox drops informing residents of work to be done, making Face Book posts -with many praiseworthy comments as well as disgruntled current Metro user comments) and glossy brochures on progress.

Specific information on seating and the Temporary Transport Plan was not made available to commuters during the exhibition periods. And the latter has only been provided recently after paid GIPA application.

There needed to be much more consultation and co-operation with State planning, local councils, experienced transport experts and communities throughout the planning process.

## **F) The impact on the environment and heritage conservation Environment**

### **Removal of Vegetation/Loss of Biodiversity**

- The biodiversity assessment was undertaken on the assumption that all vegetation within the rail corridor would need to be removed, with the exception of areas of

threatened species of Downey Wattle that are located in the rail corridor between Punchbowl & Bankstown.

- Potential 13.8 hectares of vegetation, including mature trees will be removed along the banks & rail lines to be replaced by security fence up to 2.4 m in height for the full length of the line
- .”The number of trees that need to be removed has been reduced from 893 to 503 trees (native & exotic), which will still create a great loss of canopy, biodiversity & impact on wildlife substantially.
- The area around Marrickville station is lacking in trees & any tree removals will have a significant impact on the existing sense of place.
- Existing valuable canopy trees should be retained because it takes decades to establish good tree cover.
- The final number of trees needing to be trimmed or removed is still to be confirmed during detailed design and final construction planning. Replacement trees need to be advanced specimens not tube stock.
- It is unfortunate that tree replacement will be done outside the corridor.
- There are so few well established trees in this area the decision to remove so many trees should be reviewed as replacement trees take many years to be established

## **Sustainability & Climate Change**

- Preferred Project (PP) states that majority of initiatives & targets are retained, however due to the revised scope around active transport & drainage design the following would only be considered where relevant & feasible: water sensitive urban design, inclusion of renewable energy sources & assessing & mitigating climate change.
- Surely all of the above factors should be mandatory for all aspects of the project.
- Climate variables identified in EIS included annual rainfall, extreme rainfall, extreme temperature, extreme wind, storms (cyclones, hail, dust and lightning) sea level rise and fire danger.
- All of the above variables have the potential to impact in the form of increase costs.
- Project needs to appropriately manage impacts of Climate Change & severe weather events on construction & project infrastructure functioning.
- SCC4 The need for climate change risk treatments would be assessed & incorporated into the detailed design, where required. N.B Flood modelling removed-surely climate change risks should have underpinned the project!
- SCC11 Climate Change risks states “Periodic reviews of climate change risks to be carried out to ensure ongoing resilience to the impacts of climate change.” Which indicates a “wait & see, reactionary model rather than a proactive risk assessment for the PP (Preferred Project).

## **Hydrology & Flooding**

- Preferred Project is retaining existing infrastructure where possible & minimising the extent of corridor works. It will not deliver new track drainage, modifications to cross drainage & new retention basins which it claims will not result in worsening of existing flooding or flood hazard within the surrounding rail corridor.
- Alternative storm water & flood mitigation must be addressed as in FHW! (PP) ALL flooding strategies removed
- Sydney Water (7.2.2) advised that “The project should address in detail the existing flood risk & anticipated flood management system requirements to service future

catchment conditions” and that “Flood management should not rely on existing informal storage.”

- The PP response is that the PP would be operated within the current hydrological environment & that further assessment works were no longer relevant & that no further modelling or assessment is proposed as part of detailed design Why?
- No flooding works are proposed for Marrickville Station
- 7.10.13 Marrickville Council concerned that information provided in EIS in relation to flooding is “scant & lacks specific detail as to the measures proposed to address flood mitigation in Inner West LGA.”
- Marrickville Valley Flood Study 2013 categorised Marrickville & Sydenham Railways stations as High Hazard areas in the 1% AEP event.
- Evidence of this was seen after heavy rain in April 2015 when the station was inundated by run off and flowed along the tracks at Marrickville Station.
- Study confirms that existing pit inlets do not provide sufficient capacity to convey storm flows into the main box culvert.
- EIS acknowledges high hazard area around Canterbury station but modelling of flooding was not undertaken.
- No Flood modelling outside the Marrickville Valley, which for a project this size is unacceptable.
- Predicted increase in rainfall intensity & extreme events affecting stations & surrounds requires that a flood management system is designed now so that residual flood risk to people & property is socially acceptable.
- Preferred Project must address current or potential impacts it may have on social & economic costs to the community as consequences of flooding along the line.

### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

- The annual electricity consumption during operation is estimated to be 86,576 tonnes of CO2 equivalent.
- Operation & maintenance would result in increased emissions of greenhouse gas as a result of increased use. This is not how we should be planning for the future as all new projects should be designed to reduce Carbon emissions.
- The EIS states that the “Project has the potential to reduce greenhouse emissions by providing a comfortable & efficient alternative to private car travel” however this cannot be assumed as a definite outcome as other factors such as fare increases & discomfort of standing long distances in very close proximity to other commuters may encourage car use.
- 5.52 Alternative Energy provision at stations – The Preferred Project offers less opportunities for the inclusion of renewable energy sources, however the inclusion of solar photovoltaic would be incorporated in the detailed design of stations where feasible – why not make this mandatory?
- Recommendation that sustainable initiatives must be reviewed & updated & relevant initiatives implemented including the use of renewable energy to minimise greenhouse gas emissions.

### **Development Impacts on the Cooks River**

We already know that storm water and sewerage are the major sources of pollution in the Cooks River and that aging Sydney Water infrastructure needs replacing and upgrading to cope with current developments.

The Cooks River Alliance produced a report in 2016 analysing storm water management controls within the catchment and found that some of the poorest controls were in the pre-amalgamation Canterbury Council. ([cooksriver.org.au/publications/capacity-building-stage-1-report](http://cooksriver.org.au/publications/capacity-building-stage-1-report))

Without a clear NSW Government & Council commitment to implementing Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles anything, like the Metro Southwest, that enables further development in the Cooks River valley will make pollution in the Cooks River much worse than it already is.

### **Project Footprint includes Council Land**

The PP proposal contains all the same construction compounds and worksites both within and outside the rail corridor even though Metro is no longer proposing to replace the existing rail

The construction footprint remains unchanged as Metro still requires extensive cabling and fencing which will have a significant impact on Council owned vegetation. Examples in Hurlstone Park include the corner of Melford and Canberra St, Warwick reserve and The Parade, all of which contain mature trees. It is unclear what process and consultation will occur in relation to the impact on Council owned trees and vegetation.

### **Heritage Concerns**

Impacts of Metro construction on Heritage will be significant in a historic rail corridor that is rich with built and cultural heritage.

Although, after significant and widespread criticism heritage impacts were revised and somewhat reduced in the Preferred Infrastructure Report 2018, community and experts continue to have grave concerns about heritage/character destruction and diminution. The original project as described in the Environmental Impact Statement (2017) failed to apply best practice to heritage assessments in the corridor or planned treatment of railway heritage in the project area.

All stations are heritage listed locally and Marrickville, Canterbury and Belmore are State heritage listed.

Historic Railway buildings on stations were to be demolished, overhead booking office at Dulwich Hill demolished and the curved brick faced platforms along the line demolished. In addition to massive heritage destruction, any remaining heritage would be diminished through: erecting incongruous modern station entrances; installing prefabricated "pods" on platforms; not re-purposing heritage buildings and installing glass partitions along platforms and several stations would have lost their heritage listings.

Unfortunately, the response to submissions and the Preferred Infrastructure Report, even though it acknowledges heritage concerns, was generally dismissive and did not go far enough to mitigate heritage concerns.

For housing close to stations, Statutory heritage registers are not complete along the line and council heritage assessments have been inadequate. Canterbury, Belmore, Hurlstone Park, Dulwich Hill and Marrickville have many fine homes and heritage rich-enclaves that have so far not been protected and will be lost to transit orientated development.

Minimal Heritage studies were undertaken by NBRIS, which disregarded most streets and the conclusions drawn were not consistent with community expectations and values. In addition, the PP lacked detail about what heritage elements will be retained and how they will be treated. It states "Items of fabric (are) proposed for removal" and that "the historic character of the line would be altered by the contemporary Metro infrastructure.- especially the glass door barriers.

The PP does not comment on places affected by the proposed rezoning to enable higher density.

The North West and City Metro projects have sought to value capture with tall towers at Metro stations e.g. planned 1900 units at Castle Hill Showground, 11,000 at Tallarong, 42 storeyed tower at Victoria Cross, 29 and 39 storeyed towers at Martin Place Metro entrances and exits and controversial tower heights at Waterloo. redevelopment.

The project was aligned with the unpopular "Urban renewal strategy", which involved drawing 800 metre circles around the stations to rezone the land for medium and high density development. This meant mass destruction of built heritage.

The Urban Renewal Plans were widely criticized by communities along the established character filled suburbs . Planning has been given back to local councils, however the corridor is still identified in the Eastern City District Plan for "transit orientated development". Heritage destruction is embedded in the Metro plans as the Metro is linked to urban renewal and transit orientated development. Indeed one of the objectives is to act as a catalyst for growth.

The Metro is being used to force high-density, poor quality develop onto low density, established, heritage rich and vibrant neighbourhoods. To date this has only resulted in poor quality development and heritage destruction.

While ever the Metro strategy exists there will be speculative development pressure on the corridor. Such development is highly unsuited to the established, character filled railway precincts along the T3 line. The existing subdivision patterns and streetscapes underpin the history and character of the Bankstown Corridor and loss of historic houses to concrete poorly built towers.

The NSW government has consistently and repeatedly underestimated community and expert concerns across Sydney and in relation to this project about heritage /character destruction and diminution. The EOS of 2017 attracted multiple submissions and only 17 (3%) out of 549 submitters were supportive of the project. (page 6. Part B Submission Report 2018)

The Metro project is inherently flawed, has been incorrectly attributed to a heritage rich, already dense corridor and that has a well functioning historic heavy rail line; it lacks the social license 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.

## **G) Any lobbying, political donations or other influence of the public or private sector in relation to making that decision**

It appears that lobby groups such as the Committee for Sydney, Urban Taskforce, Property Council of NSW and Planning Institute of Australia all actively lobbied for the

Southwest 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 organizations extolled the virtues of a metro and linked it to high rise development with the corridor in terms of urban renewal – notwithstanding that the term “urban renewal” was totally incorrect and it was more a case of densification on a scale never seen in the history of this country. It also involved “clear felling” of historic houses and streetscapes that would not have been tolerated in other Sydney suburbs.

It appears from various submissions made for the Metro Project in 2017 that the premise for support for the Metro clearly falls within the property development opportunities and recreating the business model of MTR in Hong Kong, Singapore and China where fortress like towers are built around the Metro stations creating the patronage for a successful business model and making the Metro viable.

## **H) The Tender process for appointing private operators**

There is little information available to the general public and this process needs to be rigorously investigated by your committee.

## **I) The contractual arrangements entered into in respect of the project**

It is clearly apparent that the tender process and contractual arrangements entered into for the SouthWest Metro are diametrically opposite to the regime put into place for the construction and design of the North West Metro. The NW Metro was awarded as a single package for construction and design whereas the SW Metro is being awarded as multiple contracts over a period of time.

Furthermore the funding arrangements for the SW Metro are clouded in secrecy and subject to non disclosure of actual budget lone line item allocations in the successive NSW State Budget Papers for the following financial years ended: 30 June 2018; 30 June 2019 and 30 June 2020 respectively.

The contractual arrangements for each of the tenders awarded thus far are confidential in nature.

The tender dollar amount for some of the contracts awarded for the SW Metro have also been withheld. Attempts to gain information through GIPA have been deemed “invalid” The public is left none the wiser as to the actual cost of the SW Metro and the role of NSW Treasury in approving such a project with no disclosure of the actual cost.

The public is left with confusing comment made by the Minister for Transport in a press release stating in April 2019 that the SW Metro will cost less than \$1 billion!

Why the government will not release the actual cost of the SW Metro remains of serious concern in terms of public accountability and transparency.

It is interesting to note that Victorian Government and NSW do things very differently and we should be asking why this is so?

An example is the Joint Venture project to build 65 High Capacity Metro Trains (HCMT) Multiple partners are used to generate competition to drive down costs of building and operating urban rail services.

Companies involved include CRRC Changchun Australia Rail Pty Limited, Downer, a local manufacturing partner and Evolution Rail, an operating partner on Cranbourne, Pakenham and Sunbury lines.

Trains will be constructed here in Australia involving large local work force for manufacturing and maintaining the new trains and not imported from Korea as in NSW. Focus is on hi tech trains that run on the existing tracks and loading gauge, compared with NSW Metro which will use fully automated, single deck carriages and narrow diameter tunnels that are incompatible with existing Sydney trains Network.

## **J) The adequacy of temporary transport arrangements during the conversion process, including for people with a disability**

### **Timing of Temporary Transport Plan**

We have significant concerns about the way that the NSW Government has handled the release of information about how commuters will be serviced during rail shutdowns required to build the Sydney Metro to Bankstown Metro.

Sydney Metro announced “A temporary transport plan will be put in place during possessions. This plan will be released to the community several years beforehand” – Sydney Metro City & Southwest February 2017 Project Update however, this has not happened.

The official Temporary Transport Plan was released publicly on 6 September 2019 after GIPA requests.

This plan only covers the shutdown of the T3 and T4 lines in late 2019 and early 2020, but not all shutdowns across the entire project construction period (including the final six month shutdown expected in 2024).

### **No community consultation on Temporary Transport Plans**

The Temporary Transport Strategy document mentions that community and stakeholder input would be sought in 2018 for in working towards finalising the Temporary Transport Plan. However, no dedicated public consultation for the Temporary Transport Plan have taken place

It also appears the Inner West has not been consulted regarding the Temporary Transport Plan. The only consultation that has been conducted is after the release of the Temporary Transport Plan in regard to parking changes outside train stations which have not been widely advertised even in the local community

The deadline for comment on parking changes outside train stations being 23 September 2019 provides insufficient time for those affected to provide submissions

### **Cancellation of Walking and Cycling Strategy**

The Sydenham to Bankstown Walking and Cycling Strategy has been cancelled by Sydney Metro and has not been included in the Temporary Transport Plan or the project going forward This will undoubtedly have a negative impact on local traffic and worsen congestion in the Inner West and Canterbury-Bankstown

### **Bus routes**

The lack of replacement bus services in the later part of the shutdown from Campsie, Canterbury, Hurlstone Park, Dulwich Hill, Marrickville, Sydenham to Central is concerning

Replacement buses finishing at Central also increases interchange at Central station as the existing T3 Bankstown Line provides direct access to City Circle station such as Town Hall, Wynyard, Circular Quay, St James, Museum

It is also concerning that replacement buses (from between Punchbowl to Sydenham) do

### **Traffic congestion from increased buses on roads**

Major traffic congestion will be the result of the shutdown of the Bankstown Line in order for it to be downgraded in Sydney Metro Southwest. The increased travel times and increased traffic congestion in the Inner West is highly avoidable as we already have a rail service. The NSW Government has also failed to release information regarding the actual routes that buses will take during the shutdown of the Bankstown Line.

Specific Problems for some stations

**Hurlstone Park:** Hurlstone Park has been forgotten in the information for parking changes for bus stops and no pin-drop map has been made available consultation

**Dulwich Hill:** Dulwich Hill bus stops are far away from the Inner West Light Rail stop

**Marrickville:** Marrickville will be the last stop on a run from Campsie so it will be standing room only if you are fortunate enough to get onto the bus.

### **Accessibility Issues with Temporary Transport Arrangements**

As acknowledged by Transport Minister Andrew Constance during Budget Estimates on 30 August 2019 and in the Temporary Transport Plan released on 6 September 2019, not all buses replacing train services between Punchbowl and Central will be accessible. This is a significant downgrade of public transport as all current train services are accessible to persons with a disability or requiring wheelchair access.

The replacement buses for the Bankstown Line shutdown also appear to be inferior to the brand new "Station Link" buses used to replace trains between Epping and Chatswood



during the construction of Sydney Metro Northwest as they were all accessible. 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.

## **K) The impact on the stations west of Bankstown**

19,000 current commuters will lose direct access to city circle trains by removing the direct train line to the city from 9 stations. These include Berala, Regents Park, Sefton, Chester Hill, Leightonfield, Villawood, Carramar, Birrong and Yagoona. (this number will increase dramatically with increases in population density)

The current design of Bankstown Station as an interchange between Sydney Trains and Sydney Metro will see commuters having to walk 450 metres as the Metro platforms are on the eastern end of the station. This will increase travel times and make it harder for the elderly and less mobile commuters and parents with prams and young children to travel. Liverpool and South West commuters can expect a significant increase in travel time of 17 minutes as a result of conversion of the Sydenham/Bankstown Line to Metro as the City via Bankstown express train will be removed as well.

Students travelling from west of Bankstown will be adversely affected as they will lose their direct line to Redfern Station. This will involve more interchanges and increased travel times. Standing on Metro trains will make reading and computer use difficult. Direct access to Circular Quay for ferries, Opera House, Art Galleries, The Rocks and Cruise Terminal will be gone. Commuters will need to change or walk 800 metres from Martin Place Metro stop.

100,000 peak hour commuters will be inconvenienced for unknown periods of time over 5 years of construction. They will be forced onto crowded buses and taken to other lines which will also experience overcrowding. This disruption will have a major impact on commuters and their families.

## **L) Any other matter**

### **Security & Safety Concerns**

1. Commuters have expressed concern that there will be no driver or conductor on Metro and fear for commuter safety. The fact that commuters can see through the length of the carriage does not allay security fears. There is supposed to be CCTV however it is implied that commuters will be responsible for "active surveillance"
2. Security issues are still of concern to commuters regarding long distances underground and include "What happens if someone lights a fire while underground? What happens if the computer control system is hacked and customers are underground & locked inside? What happens when power black outs occur? How would wheelchair customers be removed from a Metro without the guidance of on-board staff? What will happen in the event of racial abuse, fighting breaking out, aggressive behaviour from drug affected customers or terrorist threats/acts without trained on board staff?"
3. Monitoring of Metro at Tallerwang Rd is not of great comfort to commuters.

4. Docklands Light Rail in London is driverless but all trains have a conductor on board.
5. Customer assistants are promised at every station and moving through the network during day and night” however with constant cuts to the rail network workforce, what guarantee can be given that this will be the case long term?
6. All 11 stations on Southwest Metro are curved and will not be straightened due to cost and concern over loss of heritage on historic station platforms. Use of mechanical platforms will present problems if malfunctioning and the 20 second dwell time may need to be rethought on these stations to avoid accidents or “platform incidents”.
7. Width of tunnels is a major security concern with Metro tunnels described as “Death Traps” Trapped people will not be able to get out of carriages through the side of the carriage and entering the line through the front or rear of the train could be fatal to many as following driverless trains travel at 100kph will be only minutes behind.
8. Concerns expressed about personal safety for women. Sexual harassment is rife on Metros in Japan with a range of strategies being employed by women. Recent reports reveal these include “stabbing” wandering hand with safety pins. putting stickers on offenders or spraying offenders with “invisible sprays.”
9. Concerns expressed for groups who use public transport such as Seniors walking /social groups and school children on excursions trying to board and alight from the Metro safely with a 20 second dwell time. Fear that children/seniors may be left behind because inadequate time to get on & off, even if they do try to do so along the length of the train.
10. Bankstown station will be dislocated and unsafe with the current proposal to build a Metro Station to the east of the current station, forcing 19,000 daily commuters to walk 400 metres. This will be particularly difficult for the elderly, infirm and those travelling with small children.
11. Alternate transport arrangements will have the potential to result in noise & air quality impacts and for an increase in public safety risks due to the increase in vehicles on the road network.