

**Submission
No 103**

INQUIRY INTO SYDENHAM-BANKSTOWN LINE CONVERSION

Organisation: Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line

Date Received: 13 October 2019



7 October 2019

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and Customer Service
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Submission for Inquiry: “Sydenham – Bankstown Line conversion”

Introduction

Restore Inner West Line is an independent community action group, which has been advocating for public transport and sustainable development since 2013

Our main objective is the reinstatement of the City to Liverpool (& Bankstown loop) via Regents Park train service

We acknowledge the assistance of The Battler in helping us make the Save T3 Bankstown Line campaign possible

Comments

It appears that that the Sydney Trains’ 2013 timetable changes including the removal of the T2 Inner West Line’s City to Liverpool (& Bankstown) via Regents Park train service was part of original plan to introduce Sydney Metro¹

Claims that a lack of track capacity between Homebush and Lidcombe as a reason for the 2013 timetable changes have been falsified by the NSW Government as the 2017 timetable extended the T2 Inner West Line from Homebush to Parramatta

T2 Inner West Line’s termination at Homebush is part of the now-cancelled plan to convert Central to Homebush into Metro² and T3 Bankstown Line’s termination at Lidcombe is also part of the original plan to convert the line west of Bankstown into Metro³

For 9 stations (Berala, Regents Park, Sefton, Chester Hill, Leightonfield, Villawood, Carramar, Birrong, Yagoona) west of Bankstown, the Metro Southwest (Sydenham to Bankstown) removes the final direct train service to City Circle

19,000 commuters from these 9 stations west of Bankstown will be forced to catch 3 separate trains every day to reach the City Circle (changing at Bankstown then Sydenham or Central) in what currently is 1 direct train service⁴

1 Statement on Sydney Trains website “new train timetable – starts 20 October” [three tier network]
<https://web.archive.org/web/20131020102529/http://www.sydneytrains.info/news/2013/130917-timetable>

2 Paris-style train plan for city, Jacob Saulwick/Sydney Morning Herald (6 October 2011)
<https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/paris-style-train-plan-for-city-20111005-1l9pp.html>

3 Sydney’s Rail Future: 3 Tier Network [Tier 1: Rapid Transit/Metro], NSW Government (June 2012)
<https://mysydneycbd.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/user-files/uploads/rail-future-web.pdf>

4 A report dated July 2015 about the Sydney Metro and long term transport planning [letter from 4 former rail executives John Brew, Ron Christie, Bob O’Loughlin, Dick Day]
<https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2018/tra-000402.pdf>



There are no time savings on T3 Bankstown Line especially for commuters from west of Bankstown facing 2 additional interchanges to reach the City Circle

It is an unreasonable expectation on most commuters that have already experienced increased travel times and an interchange at Bankstown to walk from Pitt St or Martin Place Metro stations. For example: commuters would not want to walk 800m from Martin Place to Circular Quay

We are also concerned that there has been no consultation with the community west of Bankstown (especially Cumberland LGA) given that 19,000 commuters from 9 existing T3 Bankstown Line stations will be forced to interchange for the first time in history of Sydney railways

The Department of Planning's Sydenham to Bankstown Metro "Preferred Infrastructure Report" public exhibition in 2018 received an overwhelming number of submissions opposed to the project

91% of total submissions opposed converting Sydenham to Bankstown into Metro, with the majority of submissions also raising concerns about the negative impact of the project on the west of Bankstown⁵

The NSW Government owes the electorates of Auburn and Bankstown an explanation of why 9 stations west of Bankstown (that once had 2 direct train lines to City) deserves to have no trains whatsoever to City

The community also needs to know why the Temporary Transport Plan was only released in September 2019, when Sydney Metro promised its release with community consultation "several years beforehand"⁶ to the Bankstown Line shutdown which begins in December 2019

Recommendation

Given the consequences of downgrading the T3 Bankstown Line (including converting Sydenham to Bankstown) and the significant community opposition to Metro Southwest, we recommend that the project does not proceed

We also request that the City to Liverpool (& Bankstown) via Regents Park train service be restored given that original plans for converting T2 Inner West Line and T3 Bankstown Line have been changed

Restoring the Inner West Line to its pre-2013 route would also allow for direct train services to City Circle for the 9 stations west of Bankstown if the government chooses to ignore the community's opposition and proceeds with downgrading Sydenham to Bankstown into Metro

Upgrading signalling on the T3 Bankstown Line allows for 20 trains per hour (train every 3 minutes) compared to just 15 trains per hour with Sydney Metro (train every 4 minutes)⁷. It should be noted

5 Sydenham to Bankstown Submissions Report, Department of Planning (September 2018)
<https://majorprojects.accelo.com/public/0b71dc4ed0db6b09c5f100ecd75b7522/2018-09-12%20Sydenham%20to%20Bankstown%20Submissions%20Report.pdf>

6 Sydney Metro City & Southwest Project Update – February 2017
https://www.sydneymetro.info/sites/default/files/document-library/City%20and%20Southwest%20Project%20Overview%20Update%20February%202017_1.pdf

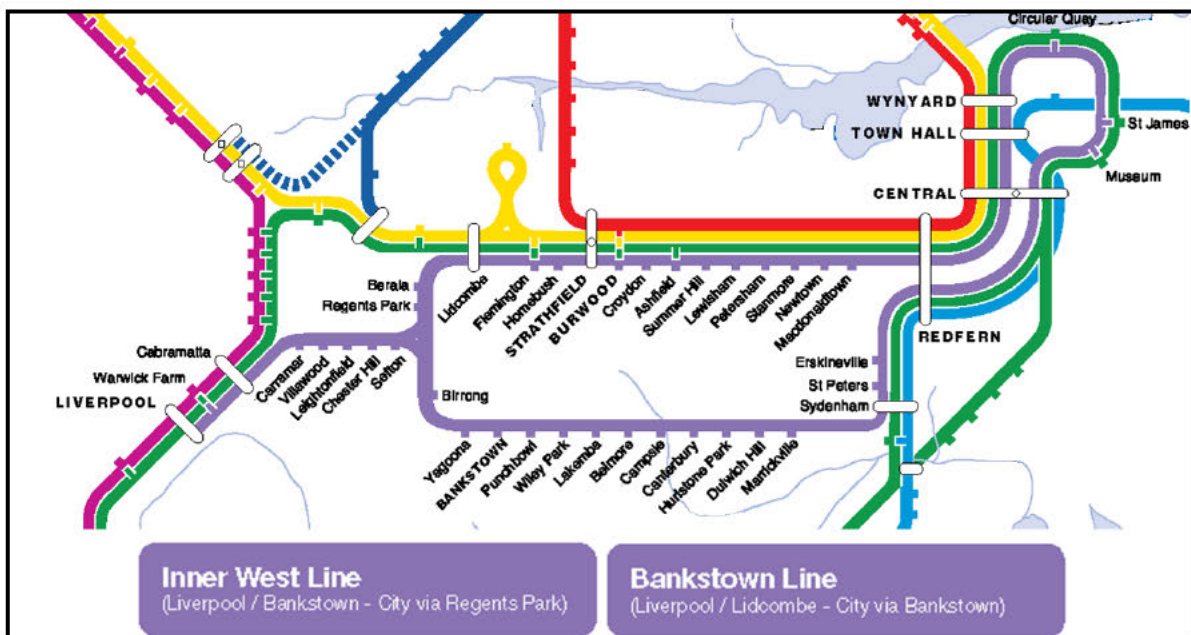
7 NSW Government says Upgraded Signalling (existing Heavy Rail) provides More Trains than Sydney Metro [compilation of media statements made by Transport Minister Andrew Constance]
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4hKGpBQcRM>



that a train every 4 minutes or higher frequency is unlikely ever to be achieved as there is no passenger demand⁸ for such frequency and also note government plans for a maximum of 15 trains per hour on Metro Southwest⁹

We also oppose the replacement of express trains at Lidcombe, Auburn, Granville with T2 Inner West Line services (from Homebush to Parramatta) as well as plans to shut down Leightonfield, Villawood, Carramar stations (bus replace trains)⁸ and the termination of T3 Bankstown Line at Cabramatta⁶

Metro should serve areas in Sydney currently without rail services and diverting the Metro from Sydenham to Miranda via Airport and F6 motorway corridor is significantly better than downgrading T3 Bankstown Line services



Inner West Line (Liverpool via Regents Park) & Bankstown Line (Bankstown loop) before 2013

We also recommend that the Committee removes the word 'line' from the title of the Inquiry to properly acknowledge that stations west of Bankstown are not being converted into Metro Southwest

We consent to the publication of this submission

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8 Which lines are priorities for Sydney Metro conversion? Hint: it's not Bankstown, Matt Hounsell/The Conversation (13 March 2019)

<http://theconversation.com/which-lines-are-priorities-for-sydney-metro-conversion-hint-its-not-bankstown-111844>

9 Sydney's Rail Future Implementation Plan/2026 Network Map (December 2013) [Obtained under GIPA]

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GyY0inesrqr_doH_M8zT1MFNWgckCw8i/view