

**Submission  
No 23**

**INQUIRY INTO CURRENT AND FUTURE PUBLIC  
TRANSPORT NEEDS IN WESTERN SYDNEY**

**Name:** Ms Dai Le  
**Date Received:** 15 September 2023

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# Dai Le MP

## Federal Member For Fowler



DAI  
LE

18 September 2023

Parliament of New South Wales  
Portfolio Committee No.6 – Transport and the Arts

Dear Committee Members

### **RE: Submission to Current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney Inquiry**

My name is Dai Le and is the Federal Member of Parliament for Fowler. As a resident and democratic representative of Western Sydney electorates, I have taken interest in the Inquiry into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney.

I would like to clarify that my intention in making this submission is to offer insight into improving the public transport needs of Western Sydney and not in any way to undermine the jurisdiction of New South Wales State Government. I can appreciate and respect that this inquiry is within the hands of the State Government.

This submission will seek to address two of this Inquiry's Term of Reference.

#### **A. Overview**

Western Sydney is within a growth area with the population estimate in 30 June 2022 showing 2,654,467, with suburbs like Camden, Parramatta and Liverpool projected to grow in population between 1% - 3% annually. It is projected that Greater Western Sydney will grow to 3 million by 2036, making it one of the largest growing urban populations in Australia.<sup>1</sup>

As the population grows, there is need to ensure there is sufficient availability and accessibility of public transport across Western Sydney. According to the *Funding the Infrastructure of Tomorrow* report, it is critical that an establishment of a '30 minute city' concept in Greater Sydney be implemented to ensure there is a socially sustainable network as part of the Future Transport Strategy 2056.<sup>2</sup>

Further, 650,000 migrants are expected to arrive in Australia in the next two years, with many anticipated to settle in Western Sydney. This places more pressure to ensure that Western Sydney has the appropriate infrastructures to support them.

As we continue to battle the growing population, it is imperative that we also match the growing demand for transport infrastructure. This is more apparent in Western Sydney where having public

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<sup>1</sup> Western Sydney University 2023, <[https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/rcegws/rcegws/About/about\\_greater\\_western\\_sydney](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/rcegws/rcegws/About/about_greater_western_sydney)>.

<sup>2</sup> McKell Institute 2014, *Getting Us There Funding the Transport Infrastructure of Tomorrow*, accessed 13 September 2023, <<https://mckellinstitute.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/McKell-Institute-Getting-Us-There-Nov-2014.pdf>>

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transport connectivity is crucial for people's livelihoods. As opposed to the Eastern Suburbs, Western Sydney has lower levels of public transport and accessibility and connectivity.

For so long, Western Sydney has been neglected in terms of public transport infrastructure. The public transport system is the backbone of many of my constituents' livelihood as they rely on them to travel to and from work. It is important that the needs of public transport for Western Sydney are carefully considered and addressed.

### **B. Terms of Reference**

#### **Term of reference 1(a) - availability and accessibility of public transport services across Western Sydney, the adequacy of connectivity between public transport hubs and commercial hubs and any gaps in services**

One of the key issues identified from my constituents is the availability and accessibility of public transport. Low-income families who do not have the luxury of using a car will rely on the public transport system as an affordable means of commuting. Their usual modes of transportation are their local trains and buses.

However, there are many train stations within Western Sydney, which are not easily accessible based on its current infrastructure. I note that Canley Vale Station upgrade was completed in 2022 as part of the Transport Access Program, which is a win for the community. Constituents has personally shared to me that train stations such as Villawood and Carramar are dilapidated and are not user friendly. Particularly, Villawood station has a plight of stairs but no elevator to accommodate individuals who have mobility issues. I understand that Guy Zangari, who was the State Member of Fairfield at the time did raise to the Minister for Transport and Roads on whether Villawood Station would be considered for Easy Access Grades. However, no action has been taken to date with this issue.

Beyond this, Constituents have also raised the accessibility of mode public transports. There are Western Sydney suburbs whereby they only have limited buses to travel to and from work. There are metro lines being prioritised elsewhere in New South Wales, but what about South-West Sydney?

#### Recommendations

I recommend that the government consider the following:

1. Upgrading Western Sydney train stations so that it provides for easier mobility access and overall positive usage, particularly Villawood, Carramar and Yennora.
2. Increased public buses to run through suburbs of Western Sydney and at greater frequencies.

#### **Term of reference 1(b) - current and anticipated levels of demand for public transport services and the public transport requirements to meet this demand**

Following the aftermath of the COVID pandemic, the reliance on public transport was reduced as working from home arrangements were introduced. However, NSW Opal data has showed that the usage of public transport is starting to rebound to pre-pandemic such as;

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- (a) The T1 Western Line is now at 85% of pre-pandemic patronage.
- (b) The T2 Leppington Line is now at 82% of pre-pandemic patronage.
- (c) The T5 Cumberland Line is now at 99% of pre-pandemic patronage.<sup>3</sup>

This suggests that the demand for public transport in Western Sydney remain relatively high. Further, there has been a reduced reliance of car usages in the recent years due to the high traffic to and from CBDs. Naturally, many commuters rely on the public transport to take them to and from work as there is some certainty of timetable. Students who attend secondary and higher education also rely on the public transport system.

With the expected migration in Western Sydney, this issue will only exacerbate as we do not have adequate infrastructure to support these newly arrived constituents. There are also plans from local councils, such as Fairfield City Council, to support opening land up in Cecil and Horsley Park for development for more than 20,000 homes to address the housing supply crisis. In addressing the housing crisis, there must also be adequate transport infrastructure to go hand in hand with the demands.

The new Western Sydney Airport is also anticipated create more jobs for individuals living in Western Sydney. At this stage, I understand that the \$25 billion Metro West line between CBD and Parramatta remains in limbo due to budget cost blowouts. Recent reports have provided that the NSW Chris Minns may continue to commit to this part of the metro line. It is critical that this commitment is honoured as it would open doors to future stops within suburbs of Western Sydney LGAs. Fairfield City Council Mayor Frank Carbone has been actively advocating for the Metro lines to come Fairfield City Council as it would mean that local constituents will have the possibility of catching a train every few minutes with ease.<sup>4</sup> This will also alleviate traffic congestions and give constituents confidence to rely on public transportation.

If the State government is unable to further the commitments of the Metro lines, an alternative is to consider implementing rapid bus links around Western Sydney Airport. This could effectively replace trains and ease with keeping cars off the road. I understand that Labor has promised to deliver rapid bus links from Campbelltown, Liverpool and Penrith to the new Western Sydney Airport, but the details on this has yet to be fully unveiled. Other Western Sydney suburbs would benefit from having rapid bus links to meet transport demands and connectivity.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the above, I recommend that the government consider implementing:

1. Construction of a Metro train line from the New Western Sydney Airport to Parramatta to connect through stops like Horsley Park, Cecil Park, Prairewood and Smithfield. These lines are located enroute to Westmead and the new Airport.
2. Provide rapid buses/shuttle buses to and from the new Airport all along Southwest Sydney.

<sup>3</sup> Transport NSW 2023, <[Public Transport Trips - All Modes | Transport for NSW](#)>.

<sup>4</sup> Fairfield City Council 2019, <<https://www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au/Your-Council/About-Council/Fairfield-City-Mayor-Frank-Carbone-Message/Advocating-for-local-metro-stations>>.

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With the inquiry into the Current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney, I ask the state government to consider the needs of Western Sydney locals, especially with the upcoming Western Sydney Airport expected in 2026 and the anticipated migration boom.

**Warm regards,**

**Dai Le MP**

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