

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

**Organisation:** Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA)

**Date Received:** 18 September 2023

---

18 September 2023

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and The Arts  
Inquiry into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney  
NSW Legislative Council  
6 Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

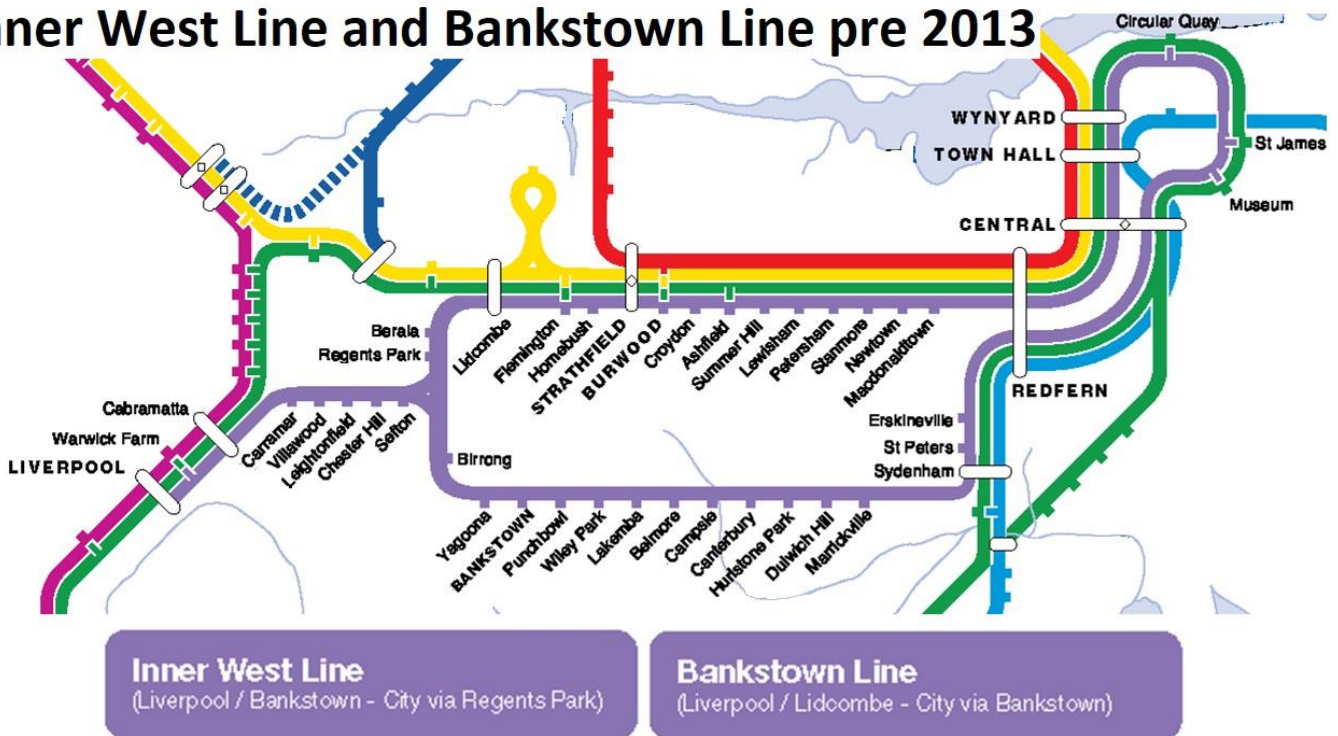
**Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA) Submission for  
Inquiry into the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney**

Dear Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and The Arts,

We are an alliance of community groups fighting massive overdevelopment and the privatisation of our train services in the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor in Southwest Sydney. Our alliance seeks to preserve the heritage and character of our suburbs and ensure that future residents in the corridor have access to the education and health infrastructure and open space they will need.

Suburbs along the T3 Bankstown Line are rich in heritage. This is hardly surprising, given the suburbs were first created when the line was extended to Belmore in 1895, then to Bankstown in 1909, and then to Regents Park (and Lidcombe/Liverpool) in 1928.

### Inner West Line and Bankstown Line pre 2013



*The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA) advocates for the T3 Bankstown Line and T2 Inner West Line to return to its pre-2013 timetable routes with direct trains from City Circle to Bankstown and Liverpool.*

However, the NSW Government Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Corridor Strategy and Priority Precincts released in 2015, subsequent Canterbury Bankstown Council Masterplans for Campsie and Bankstown, and proposals from Property Developer led Lobby Groups have shown almost no regard to existing heritage items and the character of our suburbs.



The Sydenham to Bankstown corridor and Canterbury Bankstown Council urban renewal plans will cause levels of character change and heritage destruction at a level not seen in Sydney for decades with the eventual redevelopment of 11 suburbs along the T3 Bankstown Line, of which most are predominantly residential. This differs from recent planning practices in Sydney where industrial areas have been targeted for redevelopment.

Streets containing freestanding bungalows or semi-detached housing are in the main targeted for wholesale redevelopment – with buildings of new heights anywhere from four to twenty-five storeys. The level and scale of development proposed is random, arbitrary, and brutal in their approach, resulting in suburbs being left with little of the charm, heritage, and character that attracted residents to the area in the first place.

Interfaces between areas to be developed, and those that will remain untouched, are unnecessarily jarring. Four-storey and sometimes eight-storey unit blocks will overlook single-storey homes. By targeting existing residential areas, the plans will split and divide communities.

These plans are being incorrectly justified on the basis that part of the T3 Bankstown Line (between Sydenham and Bankstown) is being replaced by Sydney Metro Southwest from 2024, with allegedly increased transport capacity. The wisdom of spending billions of dollars cannibalising an existing rail line is questioned, when this money could be used to create new transport capacity elsewhere.

Evidence would suggest the T3 Bankstown Line, and surrounding communities, are being used to provide the raw materials for a significant privatisation agenda, which involves developers taking over transport and land assets. This will be the detriment of the existing communities and with a significant prospect of a far worse urban and transport outcome in the future.

Our submission will focus on the Sydney Metro Southwest and T3 Bankstown Line including stations in the West of Bankstown area towards Lidcombe and Liverpool. Local government areas impacted include Canterbury Bankstown Council, Cumberland Council, Fairfield Council, and Liverpool Council.

We bring attention to these issues further clarified in our submission below. The Inquiry's attention is also drawn to several key documents included in our submission appendix:

- NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion report recommendations (2020)
- Letter from John Brew, Ron Christie, Bob O'Loughlin, and Dick Day warning against Metro Southwest
- ABC News Story on "Locals for Metro South West" financially backed by property developer
- End of the Line – The case against the Sydenham to Bankstown Metro and associated urban renewal plan
- Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA) Position Paper 2022-23
- Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA) Briefing Paper for Rail West of Bankstown after 2024
- Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA) Submission for NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion (2019)
- Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA) Submission for the NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Acquisition of land in relation to major transport projects (2021)
- Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA) Submission for Sydney Trains Review (2023)
- Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA) Submission for Sydney Metro Review (2023)

The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA) would be willing to appear before the Inquiry to give further evidence on the public transport needs of T3 Bankstown Line commuters.

**Kind regards,  
Steve Longhurst  
On behalf of the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA)**

**(a) the 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**

**BANKSTOWN LINE IN WESTERN SYDNEY**

The T3 Bankstown Line currently provides Sydney Trains Network heavy rail services for the key hubs of Liverpool, Cabramatta, Chester Hill, Lidcombe, Bankstown, and Campsie.



*Since 2013, T3 Bankstown Line trains operate between City Circle to Liverpool and Lidcombe via Bankstown.*

Liverpool provides a connection to South Western Sydney with the potential for direct access to Western Sydney Airport were the South West Rail Link be extended from Leppington instead Metro conversion from Glenfield.

The Liverpool and Cabramatta areas are a growing residential, industrial, and commercial centre in Western Sydney which would benefit from direct Sydney Trains Network heavy rail access to Western Sydney Airport.

Chester Hill is an important intermediary hub with residential, industrial, and commercial centres in the West of Bankstown area as both a Sydney Trains Network station and also a north-south bus interchange for connections towards Granville and Georges Hall.

Lidcombe provides connection to Western Sydney, Parramatta, Olympic Park, and the Inner West (formely a direct train service until the 2013 timetable which terminated trains at Lidcombe, initially as part of early 2012 plans to convert the West of Bankstown into Sydney Metro Southwest<sup>1</sup>).

The fast growing population of Liverpool, Cabramatta, Chester Hill, and Lidcombe in the West of Bankstown area can only be sustained through increased Sydney Trains Network heavy rail services with direct routes to the City Circle via Inner West, and direct routes to Canterbury-Bankstown.

<sup>1</sup> Transport for NSW "Sydney's Rail Future" (2012)  
<https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/media/documents/2017/sydneys-rail-future.pdf>



Bankstown is the heart of the T3 Bankstown Line and once again we express our disappointment at the announced changes to be implemented from 2024 that will divide the line with Sydney Trains Network heavy rail removed between Sydenham to Bankstown, and also with direct trains removed between Liverpool and Bankstown.

Campsie is also a growing residential and commercial hub on the T3 Bankstown Line and hence it will be a significant downgrade from 2024 when Campsie loses not only direct trains to City Circle but also direct trains to stations such as Lidcombe, Chester Hill, Cabramatta, and Liverpool.

### **TIMETABLES & SIGNALLING UPGRADE**

Current service gaps include the low frequency of T3 Bankstown Line service gaps especially in the off-peak and weekends. The infrequency of services is particularly evident in the West of Bankstown area for stations between Lidcombe and Bankstown, and Liverpool and Bankstown.

It should be noted that conversion of Sydenham to Bankstown into Sydney Metro Southwest is not the best value solution to improve service frequencies for the T3 Bankstown Line and the Sydney Trains Network<sup>2</sup>.

While Sydney Metro promises a train every 4 minutes in peak, it is important to note that upgrading Sydney Trains Network heavy rail signalling (as announced for the T8 Airport Line and T4 Illawarra Line) would enable a train every 2½ minutes<sup>3</sup>.

The NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion also recommended that the Sydney Metro project terminate at Sydenham, and that consideration should be given towards implementation of signalling upgrades for the Sydney Trains Network to improve service frequencies<sup>4</sup>.

### **LACK OF NIGHTRIDE BUSES**

Another key shortcoming for public transport services along the T3 Bankstown Line corridor especially in the West of Bankstown area is the absence of NightRide bus services for Yagoona, Birrong, and Carramar stations.

Additionally, the T3 Bankstown Line is split into the 3 NightRide bus routes<sup>5</sup>:

- N30 (City to Campbelltown) which includes Belmore (Canterbury Road) then Punchbowl (Canterbury Road) then Moorebank then Liverpool...
- N40 (City to East Hills) which includes stops at train stations including Bankstown then Padstow...
- N50 (City to Liverpool) which includes stops at Lidcombe Station to Liverpool via Regents Park.

There is also a lack of direct NightRide bus services Lidcombe to Bankstown, and Liverpool to Bankstown.

NightRide buses should not just focus on being Sydney CBD orientated but also serve intermediary connections between local hubs in Western Sydney (and/or at the very least reflect more closely the existing regular Sydney Trains Network service lines).

---

<sup>2</sup> NSW Legislative Council "Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion report" (April 2020) [https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2551/Report%20No%2011\\_PC%206\\_Sydenham-Bankstown%20line%20conversion.pdf](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2551/Report%20No%2011_PC%206_Sydenham-Bankstown%20line%20conversion.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Murray Trembath (St George Leader) "First contracts awarded to greatly increase capacity on T4 Illawarra and T8 Airport lines" (2020) <https://www.theleader.com.au/story/6764995/a-train-every-two-minutes/> (21 May 2020)

<sup>4</sup> NSW Legislative Council "Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion report" (April 2020) [https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2551/Report%20No%2011\\_PC%206\\_Sydenham-Bankstown%20line%20conversion.pdf](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2551/Report%20No%2011_PC%206_Sydenham-Bankstown%20line%20conversion.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Transport for NSW "Sydney NightRide Buses Network" (2020) <https://transportnsw.info/document/1422/sydney-nightride-network-map.pdf>

It is also ironic that a direct NightRide bus is provided from City to Liverpool via Regents Park (N50) but not a regular Sydney Trains Network heavy rail train service between 4am and 1am (despite Transport for NSW admitting in 2020 that capacity currently is available using existing infrastructure for such train line to operate).

### **STATION/NETWORK ACCESSIBILITY**

We bring attention to the fact that Station Upgrades including accessibility improvements are not exclusive to Sydney Metro and that the Transport for NSW Transport Access Program provides funding for lifts.

It is shameful for the Sydney Metro to falsely claim that T3 Bankstown Line stations would only be able to be upgraded as part of the Metro conversion, when in fact many Sydney Trains Network heavy rail stations have had lifts installed without being converted into Metro.

Additionally, there remains a lack of lifts at Chester Hill, Villawood, and Carramar in the West of Bankstown area.

Chester Hill should be a priority for the Transport Access Program in 2024 as this is the highly populous suburb on the T3 Bankstown Line in the immediate West of Bankstown area, and also a key bus interchange for South Granville and Bass Hill commuters.

It is also concerning that the design of Bankstown Station (Sydney Trains) and new Bankstown Interchange (Sydney Metro) involves a 450m walk between the platforms<sup>6</sup>, this will cause hardship for mobility impaired commuters and ultimately reduce the attractiveness of public transport.

We also call on the NSW Government to guarantee all temporary buses operating for the shutdown of the T3 Bankstown Line for Sydney Metro Southwest construction in 2024-25 will be fully accessible and air-conditioned.

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

### **SYDNEY METRO SOUTHWEST BUSINESS CASE UNJUSTIFIED**

The T3 Bankstown Line is currently under capacity from the 2012 commuter statistics relied on in a false attempt to justify the Sydney Metro Southwest<sup>7</sup>. And also patronage demand to support the Sydney Metro Southwest again does not exist especially as the post-COVID commuter levels have changed with increased work from home and behavioural shifts.

The NSW Government has also not complied with the recommendation of the NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion (2019-20) for the immediate release of the full business case for Sydney Metro City & Southwest<sup>8</sup>.

We also call upon the NSW Government to confirm its position in regard to the implementation of the other recommendations arising from the NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion.

---

<sup>6</sup> Liz Daniels (Nine News Sydney) "Inquiry says Sydney's new metro may lead to longer commute times"  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wz3tPW0N7io> (6 November 2019)

<sup>7</sup> Matthew Hounsell (The Conversation) "Which lines are priorities for Sydney Metro conversion? Hint: it's not Bankstown"  
<https://theconversation.com/which-lines-are-priorities-for-sydney-metro-conversion-hint-its-not-bankstown-111844> (13 March 2019)

<sup>8</sup> NSW Legislative Council "Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion report" (April 2020)  
[https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2551/Report%20No%2011\\_PC%206\\_Sydenham-Bankstown%20line%20conversion.pdf](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2551/Report%20No%2011_PC%206_Sydenham-Bankstown%20line%20conversion.pdf)

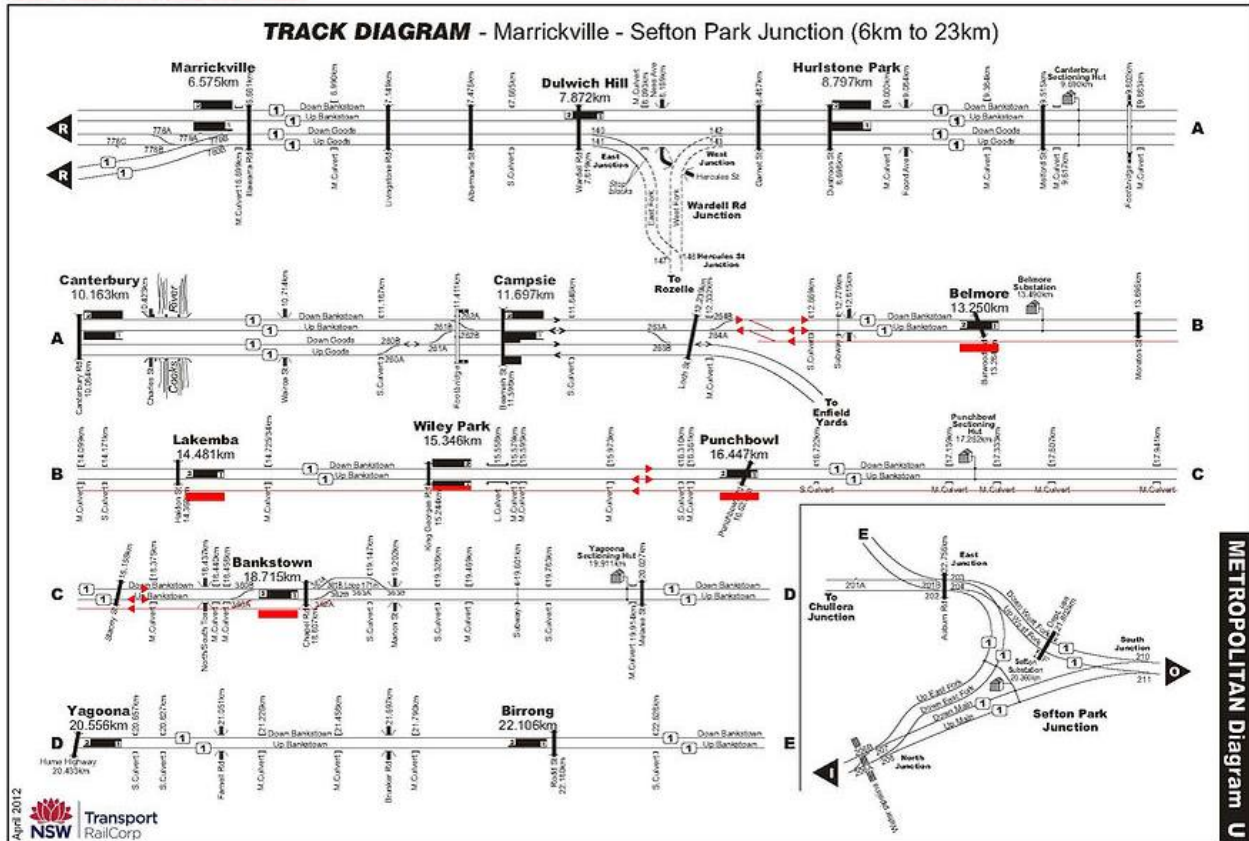


**CAMPSIE TO BANKSTOWN THIRD TRACK**

As Sydney shifts west, the focus of public transport should not only be towards Sydney CBD but towards the growing centres of Liverpool and Western Sydney Airport. One of the major projects that Transport for NSW has abandoned to pursue Sydney Metro from Sydenham to Bankstown is the “Third Tracking from Campsie to Bankstown”.

With the Campsie to Bankstown 3rd Track (Passing Loop), a direct Sydney Trains service from Liverpool to Central could be achieved in 37 minutes and Bankstown to Central could be a 22 minute journey<sup>9</sup>.

Option 1A: Campsie (Loch St) to Bankstown (inclusive of 3rd Platform) Third Track - Up Side  
**New Track and Platforms in RED**



*Schematic of the Campsie to Bankstown Third Track proposed by Transport for NSW in 2012.*

This is the real upgrade needed on T3 Bankstown Line as it would enable express trains to City Circle from Liverpool (and future Western Sydney Airport via Leppington).

It is unfortunate that the “Campsie to Bankstown Third Track” project has been cancelled by the NSW Government for the Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion and Glenfield to Leppington line (South West Rail Link extension) for conversion into Metro.

Equally disappointing is the failure of the Sydney Metro business case to consider the cost benefits of upgrading the T3 Bankstown Line with projects such as Campsie to Bankstown Third Track.

We also support new digital signalling upgrades for the entire Sydney Trains Network especially for the T2 Inner West/Leppington, T3 Bankstown Line, and T8 Airport/South Line to enable 30 trains per hour.

<sup>9</sup> “Campsie to Bankstown Passing Loop” (documents released by Transport for NSW under GIPA Act and published at <https://www.savet3.org/campsie-bankstown>)

**TEMPORARY TRANSPORT PLAN FOR T3 BANKSTOWN LINE SHUTDOWN**

We call on Transport for NSW to urgently finalise and release the Temporary Transport Plan for the T3 Bankstown Line shutdown taking place from mid-2024 onwards.

Residents, commuters, students, and businesses need time to plan ahead especially when 100,000 commuters forced onto buses everyday. The 2 week timetable notice period is highly inadequate and does not allow the community to prepare for the residual impacts of the T3 Bankstown Line shutdown.

**FUTURE RAIL WEST OF BANKSTOWN**

The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance supports the restoration of the former T2 Inner West Line: City to Liverpool via Regents Park (notwithstanding its incorrect name of T3 Bankstown Line as Bankstown Station is not on this route)<sup>10</sup>.

We are also grateful to the NSW Government for its commitment to not close West of Bankstown stations upon the opening of Sydney Metro Southwest (Sydenham to Bankstown)<sup>11</sup>, and urge the NSW Government to issue a formal directive to Transport for NSW/Sydney Metro to cease planning the closure of stations.

We remain concerned that Birrong and Yagoona commuters will be left without a direct to Central let alone City Circle as these 2 stations will only be serviced by a Lidcombe to Bankstown shuttle line.

It is imperative that the City Circle to Bankstown via Regents Park train service be restored (as Transport for NSW admitted in 2020 that there are no capacity constraints for this route on the current Sydney Trains Network infrastructure)<sup>12</sup>.

We also oppose the removal of direct trains between Liverpool and Bankstown (with commuters forced to interchange at Regents Park between the Liverpool via Regents Park line and the Lidcombe to Bankstown shuttle).

All 3 sides of Sefton Junction should be operated with direct trains to City Circle, Liverpool, and Bankstown.



*Rail West of Bankstown pre-2013 timetable cuts to Sydney Trains.*

<sup>10</sup> Transport for NSW “Planning for rail services west of Bankstown” <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/current-projects/planning-for-rail-services-west-of-bankstown>

<sup>11</sup> Joanne Vella (The Daily Telegraph/Parramatta Advertiser) “Sydney Metro proposed plan to shut nine train stations permanently after Bankstown-Sydenham Metro lines opens”

<https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/parramatta/sydney-metro-proposed-plan-to-shut-nine-train-stations-permanently-after-bankstownsydenham-metro-lines-opens/news-story/3db941e7227c45e3e05a2f0efe5b4699> (6

September 2023)

<sup>12</sup> Transport for NSW “Planning for rail west of Bankstown” <https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-06/planning-for-rail-services-west-of-bankstown.pdf>



**(c) the changing nature of public transport needs due to shifting demographics, new suburbs, planned infrastructure and increased density**

**LAST MILE TRANSIT**

Attention is drawn again the NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion (2019-20) which recommended that Transport for NSW/Sydney Metro work closely with Councils on the rail corridor<sup>13</sup>.

It is disappointing that little attention has been given to both active transport and also last mile transit for the Sydenham to Bankstown Metro especially with the Canterbury Bankstown Council area.

The community is completely in the dark in regards to future bus services, and noting from the experience of commuters in The Hills when Sydney Metro Northwest opened, the reduction in bus services was an issue that should be addressed sooner rather than later.

Residents and commuters living near Metro stations and train stations need to know that the surrounding bus stop infrastructure and road network will also be improved as a whole of town centre approach. We cannot simply have a Metro station and assume everything will be unaffected.

The residual impacts of Sydney Metro Southwest particularly on how commuters undertake last mile transit from their homes to the Metro station must properly be accounted for before the opening of the Sydenham to Bankstown Metro in 2025.

**BANKSTOWN AIRPORT & LIGHT RAIL**

The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance acknowledges the need to improve access to the Bankstown Airport precinct and increase rail services towards Liverpool. As discussed previously, the best option to improve rail for Liverpool is through the “Third Tracking from Campsie to Bankstown”<sup>14</sup> project to allow for express trains to Western Sydney Airport via Liverpool.

We believe that Bankstown Airport is best serviced by new light rail and improvements to the 905 bus route (Bankstown to Fairfield). New light rail should operate from Parramatta to Granville/South Granville to Chester Hill to Bankstown Airport to Condell Park to Bankstown. This is consistent with the need to improve connections with Parramatta (as Sydney’s second CBD and as part of the Central River City area).



*Proposal: New Light Rail from Bankstown to Parramatta (via Bankstown Airport, Chester Hill, South Granville)*

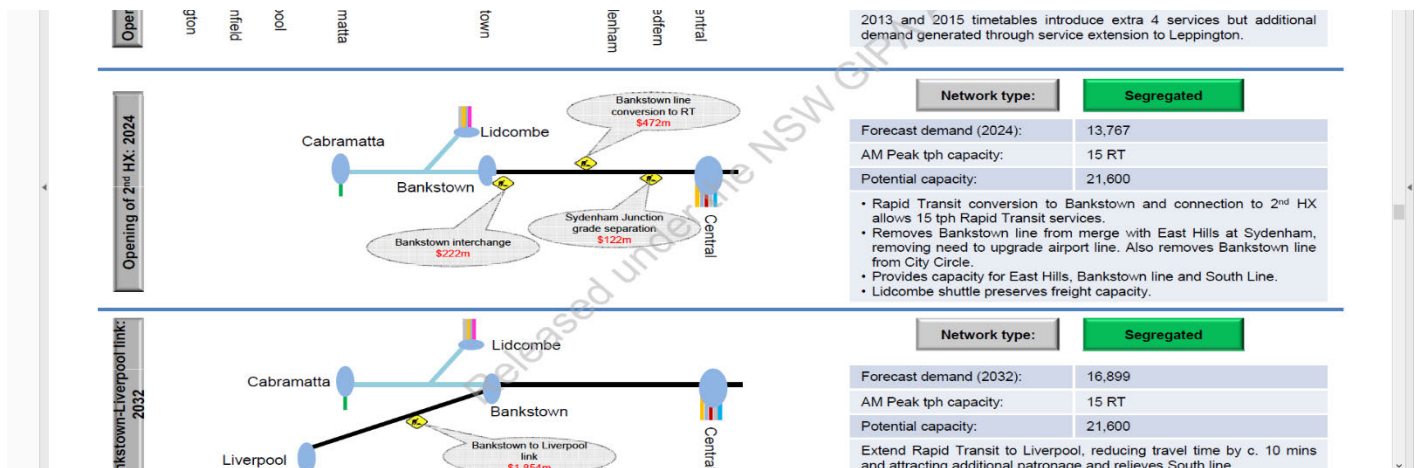
<sup>13</sup> NSW Legislative Council “Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion report” (April 2020) [https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2551/Report%20No%2011\\_PC%206\\_Sydenham-Bankstown%20line%20conversion.pdf](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2551/Report%20No%2011_PC%206_Sydenham-Bankstown%20line%20conversion.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> “Campsie to Bankstown Passing Loop” (documents released by Transport for NSW under GIPA Act and published at <https://www.savet3.org/campsie-bankstown>)

The West of Bankstown area and also Cumberland Council LGA are one of the most transport disadvantaged communities in Sydney as well have borne the most significant impact from reductions to Sydney Trains services since 2013<sup>15</sup>. Providing such areas currently without rail access with light rail would significantly improve transit.

### METRO SOUTHWEST EXTENSION

The cost of Metro Southwest extension from Bankstown to Liverpool would be very significant to the taxpayer noting that Sydenham to Bankstown Metro has increased from \$816 million<sup>16</sup> to \$10 billion dollars<sup>17</sup>. To date, Transport for NSW has refused to release any updated breakdowns of the individual costs of the Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion, Bankstown Interchange, or Sydenham Junction grade separation.



*In 2012, Transport for NSW costings for the Sydenham to Bankstown Metro (for 2024) totalled just \$816 million and the Metro Southwest extension from Bankstown to Liverpool (for 2032) was costed at \$1.8 billion.*

For Metro Southwest to extend from Bankstown to Liverpool would also require the demolition of the Bankstown Arts Centre and existing Sydney Trains platforms (west of the Bankstown Metro station) in order for tunnelling portals to commence (as during the 2019 Inquiry to Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion, Transport for NSW ruled out an underground Bankstown Metro Station)<sup>18</sup>.

Transport for NSW has previously expressed concerns in 2018 that the Bankstown Station rail corridor too narrow to accommodate an end to end Metro interchange with Sydney Trains<sup>19</sup>, let alone have the space for a widening of the existing rail corridor. It appears that Transport for NSW is only left with the option of extending Metro through Bankstown Station with the acquisition of Bankstown Arts Centre and Greenwood Avenue for tunnelling.

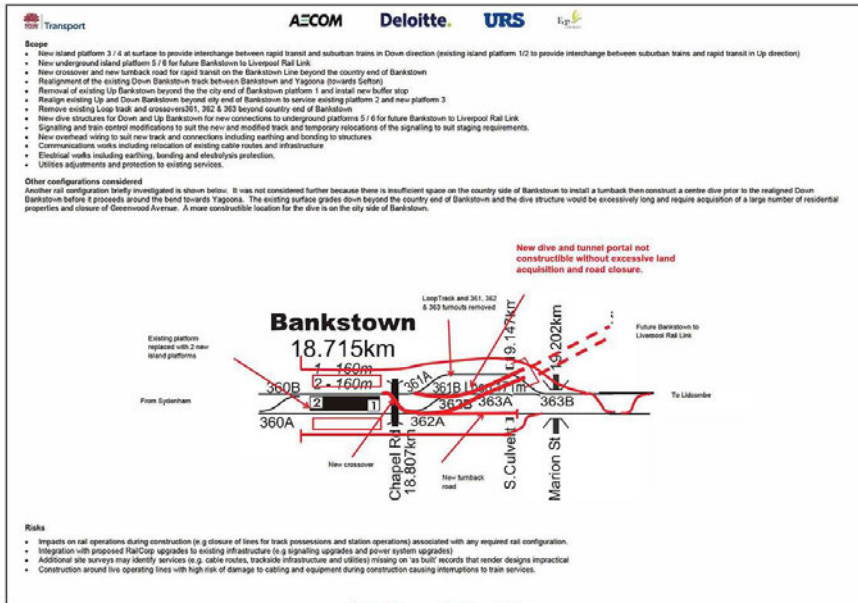
<sup>15</sup> Restore Inner West Line "Cumberland LGA Worse Hit by Train Cuts" <https://restoreinnerwestline.org.au/cumberland-lga-worse-hit-by-train-cuts> (2018) (documents released by Transport for NSW under GIPA Act)

<sup>16</sup> Transport for NSW "Sydney's Rail Future Rail Advisory Committee Roll Out Plan" (2012) (documents released by Transport for NSW under GIPA Act for GIPA Application 20T-0909)

<sup>17</sup> Joanne Vella (The Daily Telegraph/Parramatta Advertiser) "Sydney Metro proposed plan to shut nine train stations permanently after Bankstown-Sydenham Metro lines opens" <https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/parramatta/sydney-metro-proposed-plan-to-shut-nine-train-stations-permanently-after-bankstown-sydenham-metro-lines-opens/news-story/3db941e7227c45e3e05a2f0efe5b4699> (6 September 2023)

<sup>18</sup> "Bankstown to Liverpool" (documents released by Transport for NSW under GIPA Act and published at <https://www.savet3.org/bankstown>)

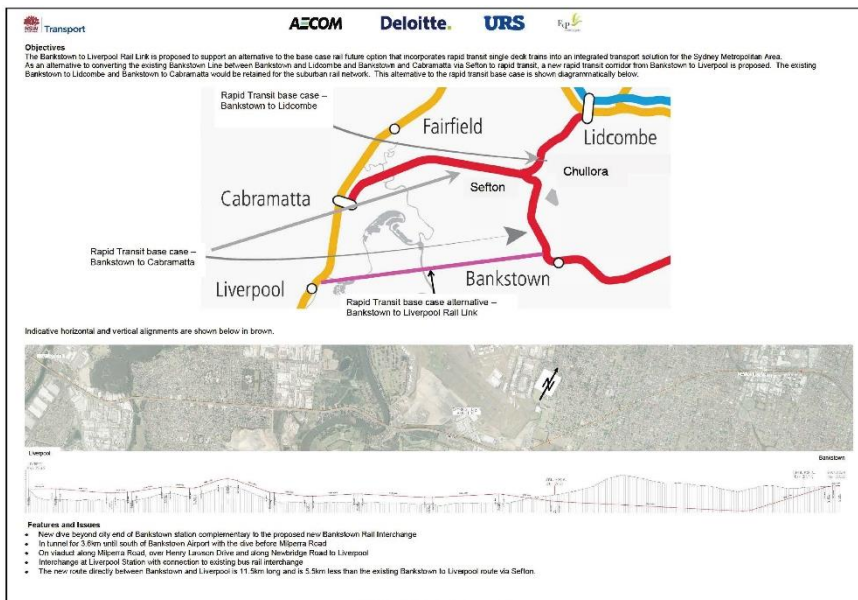
<sup>19</sup> Matt O'Sullivan (Sydney Morning Herald) "'Yagoona Metro' on the cards if Bankstown proves too hard" <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/yagoona-metro-on-the-cards-if-bankstown-proves-too-hard-20181119-p50gyk.html> (20 November 2018)



As Transport for NSW has ruled out an underground Bankstown Metro Station (aka. tunnel dive on the City end of Bankstown Station), the only remaining option is for the tunnel dive towards Liverpool to be on the western side of Bankstown Station impacting upon the Bankstown Arts Centre.

Noting that NSW Future Transport Strategy 2056 (published in 2021) excludes any direct rail services between Lidcombe and Bankstown, it is likely that the extension of Metro Southwest from Bankstown to Liverpool will result in the removal of Sydney Trains services in the West of Bankstown area (e.g. Birrong and Yagoona) as expansion of Bankstown Station (to allow Lidcombe to Bankstown trains to turnback) does not appear likely.

Also given the difficult geography of the Georges Hall and Moorebank areas, a majority of the Metro Southwest extension would be a skytrain viaduct along the northern side of Milperra Road and Newbridge Road thus resulting in the forced acquisition of every property (approximately 160 addresses)<sup>20</sup>.



The Transport for NSW plan for Metro Southwest extension from Bankstown to Liverpool includes a tunnel dive west of Bankstown Station (at the current Bankstown Arts Centre site) for tunnels to Bankstown Airport where the line surfaces and proceeds to Liverpool Station on a skytrain viaduct along Milperra Road/Newbridge Road.

<sup>20</sup> “Bankstown to Liverpool Rail Link” (documents released by Transport for NSW under GIPA Act and published at <https://www.savet3.org/liverpool>)



It should be noted that the Metro Southwest extension only includes 2 proposed stations being at Bankstown Airport (near Milperra Road) and Moorebank (near Governor Macquarie Drive). Metros should have frequent stops located at close proximity to each other in order to be an effect transit line.

Given the high costs and significant culmulative impacts (including the large number of properties to be acquired), we do not support extension of Sydney Metro Southwest from Bankstown to Liverpool.

As discussed earlier, new light rail (from Bankstown to Parramatta) would be a more economical method of providing new transport connections for Bankstown Airport. We also support improved bus servies to service Georges Hall, Moorebank, and Chipping Norton areas.

**(d) the social, economic and planning impacts of vehicle dependency and poorly integrated public transport**

**CASE NOT MADE FOR METRO SOUTHWEST**

The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance believes that conversion of Sydenham to Bankstown into Metro is a wasted opportunity for investment in establishing an integrated public transport network in Western Sydney that would reduce private vehicle dependency.

The NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion (2019-20) found that the case for Sydney Metro Soutwest had not been adequately made and recommended that Sydney Metro terminate at Sydenham<sup>21</sup>.

Sydney Metro Southwest does not add new public transport options for Western Sydney, and will reduce the attractiveness of the rail network given that a significant number of Western Sydney stations and City Circle will no longer be directly accessible once Sydenham to Banktown is converted into Metro<sup>22</sup>.

Noting that Sydney Metro City & Southwest Business Case was created in 2016 based upon 2012 patronage forecasts (and has not been updated to account for the COVID pandemic), there is little evidence that conversion of Sydenham to Banktown into Metro is justified.

The residual impact of Sydney Metro Southwest (including the closure of the T3 Bankstown Line for 12 months) will disincentivise economically disadvantaged communities to reduce car dependency. The T3 Bankstown Line is a core social and economic artery for Western Sydney, and the removal of train services causes a level of disruption that cannot simply be replaced with bus services.

The highly cultural and linguistically diverse population will face challenges in navigating the replacement bus services and will either find it more attractive to drive or be discouraged to travel due to the new difficulties of commuting.

Increased private vehicle usage alongside the replacement buses will increase traffic as well as pollution. The increased pollution and/or the increased number of commuters deciding to remain home will also increase social isolation, of which both are also ultimately health issues.

With a decline in health outcomes arisies impacts on the economic growth of the region hence ultimately, the case for converting Sydenham to Bankstown into Metro has not been made.

<sup>21</sup> NSW Legislative Council "Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion report" (April 2020) [https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2551/Report%20No%2011\\_PC%206\\_Sydenham-Bankstown%20line%20conversion.pdf](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2551/Report%20No%2011_PC%206_Sydenham-Bankstown%20line%20conversion.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> Sydney Metro "Sydenham to Bankstown" <https://www.sydneymetro.info/citysouthwest/sydenham-bankstown>



**(e) the affordability compared with other areas of Greater Sydney and New South Wales and relative to means**

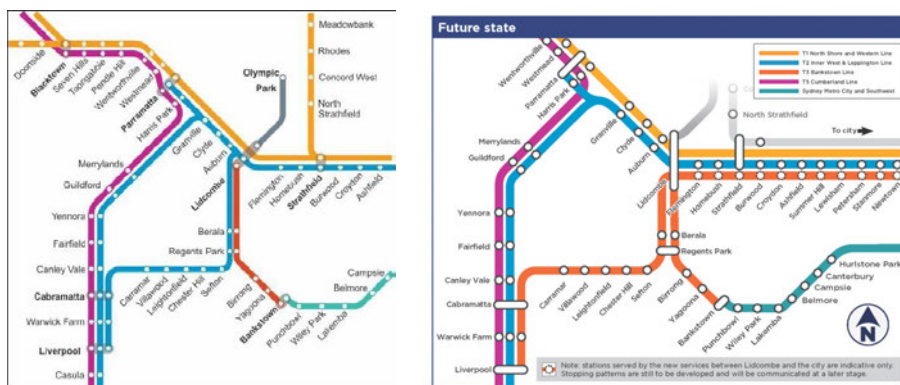
**TIME TRANSFER PENALTY**

The announced changes to the T3 Bankstown Line in the coming years will be of significant cost to community.

Already with no timesavings relative to the number of stations travelled between Bankstown and Sydenham or Bankstown and Central once Sydney Metro City & Southwest opens, the cost to the community arising from the residual impacts of the project will make the overall cost greater than previously.

Sydenham to Bankstown commuters are penalised in time by not having any direct trains to City Circle, and in being forced to interchange at Central. Commuters are also penalised if they wish to travel to Redfern, St Peters and Erskenville. For many Sydney University students, the lack of a direct connection to Redfern will result in a bus transfer at Central which adds to the financial and time cost of commuting.

West of Bankstown commuters such as from Birrong and Yagoona are penalised in time by not having any direct trains to Central, and being forced to interchange at Bankstown or Lidcombe. Also, West of Bankstown commuters such as from Sefton – Liverpool are penalised in time by not having any direct trains to Bankstown, and being forced to change at Regents Park<sup>23</sup>.



Left: Rail West of Bankstown in 2024 (internal Transport for NSW map)<sup>24</sup>. Right: In the public map, Transport for NSW deliberately misleads commuters with an incorrectly reference to the pre-2013 T2 Inner West Line “City to Liverpool via Regents Park” as T3 Bankstown Line despite Bankstown Station not being on the line<sup>25</sup>.

Travel across the Canterbury Bankstown Council area will become significantly disjointed such as the from Chester Hill to Canterbury which is currently one direct train. But from 2024 onwards due to Metro Southwest, Chester Hill commuters will need to interchange at Regents Park then interchange at Bankstown to travel to Canterbury. Such journey will increase from 26 minutes to at least 49 minutes.

The interchange at Bankstown Station is also unlike the easy transfer at Chatswood (cross-platform) but a 450m walk with the need to pass through 2 sets of ticket barriers (tap off and tap on again)<sup>26</sup>. The NSW Government can hardly claim that Sydney Metro Southwest provides an integrated transport outcome for T3 Bankstown Line commuters.

<sup>23</sup> Transport for NSW “Planning for rail services west of Bankstown” <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/current-projects/planning-for-rail-services-west-of-bankstown>

<sup>24</sup> Transport for NSW “Broad range of options” (documents released by Transport for NSW under GIPA Act for GIPA Application 21T-0844)

<sup>25</sup> Transport for NSW “Planning for rail services west of Bankstown” <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/current-projects/planning-for-rail-services-west-of-bankstown>

<sup>26</sup> Sydney Metro “Bankstown Station Design and Precinct Plan” [https://www.sydneymetro.info/sites/default/files/2021-12/Bankstown\\_Station\\_Design\\_and\\_Precinct\\_Plan.pdf](https://www.sydneymetro.info/sites/default/files/2021-12/Bankstown_Station_Design_and_Precinct_Plan.pdf) (2021)



The commuter experience for South West Sydney and existing T3 Bankstown Line passengers will be significantly worse in comparison to Sydney Metro Northwest, North Shore and Chatswood passengers which have a seamless cross-platform interchange between Metro and trains.

**(f) the role of public transport and future transport technologies to reduce car dependency in Western Sydney, including barriers to improving public transport services**

**TIMETABLE CHANGES**

Transport for NSW has used the 2013 and 2017 timetable changes to downgrade the T3 Bankstown Line and reduce the commuter experience. In 2013, the T3 Bankstown Line was terminated at Lidcombe thus removing direct trains to City Circle via Inner West. Commuters especially in the West of Bankstown area has had to make multiple interchanges.

For example Sefton to Homebush used to be a direct train of 16 minutes, but since 2013 it's now up to 53 minutes with 4 separate trains (Sefton to Birrong to Lidcombe to Strathfield to Homebush).

Then in the 2017 timetable, Sydney Trains reintroduced a disproportionate number of unairconditioned trains and older carriages onto the T3 Bankstown Line<sup>27</sup> ahead of the the public exhibition period in 2018 for the Sydney Metro Southwest (Sydenham to Bankstown Preferred Infrastructure Report).

2013 Weekday Services (each day)				
Waratah	Millennium C-Set	K-Set	S-Set	
119	143	11	49	8
36%	43%	3%	15%	2%

2017 Weekday Services (each day)				
Waratah	Millennium C-Set	K-Set	S-Set	
188	68	49	94	32
44%	16%	11%	22%	7%

*The Sydney Trains timetable introduced in 2017 against internal Transport for NSW advice increased the number of non-airconditioned and older trains on the T3 Bankstown Line.*

Comfortable and adequate public transport services need to be provided for Western Sydney in the context of the hotter temperatures, the longer distances travelled, and also the greater need to incentivise the reduction of car dependency.

**ACTIVE TRANSPORT**

Greater investment in active transport needs be initiated in Canterbury Bansktown Council and Cumberland Council to reduce car dependency and encourage use of public transport.

We must reduce traffic not just by moderating the new development of apartments but also encouraging more commuters to cycle and walk. It is important that the Sydenham to Bankstown active transport corridor is completed with the opening of Sydney Metro Southwest, and that further north-south active transport links are considered to reduce car dependency for localised journeys.

Road safety, better urban planning and education/awareness is needed to increase attractiveness of cycling and walking in Western and South Western Sydney is critical.

<sup>27</sup> Transport for NSW "Information about train set types used on the Sydney Trains' network prior to and after 26 November 2017 when a new train timetable was introduced (12 January 2018)" (documents released by Transport for NSW under GIPA Act for GIPA Application STR-000308)



Therefore the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance would support the rollout of the “Better Streets Coalition” initiatives along the T3 Bankstown Line corridor suburbs including encouraging more walking, cycling, and patronage of local businesses through reducing traffic, better accessibility, and a stronger active transport network<sup>28</sup>.

### **IMPACT ON LOCAL BUSINESSES**

Local businesses will be impacted to an extent that will potentially damage the regional economy. People are less likely to frequent local business outside train stations that would normally visit if there was a direct train service.

For example, a Canterbury commuter travelling to Chester Hill currently has a direct train. The Canterbury commuter would walk or take a bus to Canterbury Station then buy a coffee when waiting for the train. But once Sydney Metro Southwest opens and the 2024 timetable changes are implemented, there won't be a direct train from Canterbury to Chester Hill.

Canterbury to Chester Hill becomes: Metro to Bankstown, then train to Bankstown, then train to Regents Park, then train to Chester Hill. Therefore, it is more likely that the Canterbury (former) commuter would likely drive directly to Chester Hill avoiding local businesses and also adding to traffic congestion.

The abovementioned impacts would be in addition to the impacts of the Sydney Metro Southwest construction shutdowns of the T3 Bankstown Line from July 2024 onwards. Looking at the construction impacts on Parramatta and George St in Sydney CBD, the conversion of Sydenham to Bankstown into Metro will also impact businesses.

A lack of support for small business has also been evident along the T3 Bankstown Line with no plans to encourage customers to shop local during construction of Sydney Metro Southwest. We call on the NSW Government to work with local Councils and Chambers of Commerce to ensure that the construction of Sydney Metro Southwest does not result in the foreclosure of businesses.

### **(g) the role of the public and private sector, including local government and the use of innovative funding models, such as transit oriented development and value capture mechanisms, in public transport provision**

The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance expresses concern at proposals to introduce new blanket value capture mechanisms on existing residents (such as in a 1.2km radius) near railway stations. We believe that such is an unprincipled levy that ultimately is punitive, counterproductive, and shows a disregard to the heritage of communities especially when applied to brownfields.

Increased access to public transport is vital to respond to a growing Sydney, but the solution for a lack of access to public transport is not necessarily to increase densities nearby to existing infrastructure, but rather to construct new rail lines for areas currently without rail access. Penalising residential areas for their existing proximity to railway stations will encourage growth of communities further away from public transport and ultimately lead to increased dependence on private vehicles.

### **PROPERTY DEVELOPER AND LOBBYISTS**

The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance continues to be concerned that property developer lobby groups such as “Locals for Metro Southwest” lack transparency including receiving special benefits from Transport for NSW, recognition as an official project stakeholder (with a briefing session at the Sydney Metro office in Campsie)<sup>29</sup>,

---

<sup>28</sup> Better Streets Coalition <https://www.betterstreets.org.au/>

<sup>29</sup> Refer to the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA) Submission (Correspondence) for the NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Acquisition of land in relation to major transport projects (2021)



special access to the boardroom of then Premier Gladys Berejiklian for meetings<sup>30</sup>, and the supply of a Ministerial video from then Transport Minister Andrew Constance<sup>31</sup>.

The “Locals for Metro Southwest” have also been represented by registered lobbyist Harry Hughes (Axis Strategic Advisory), who is the nephew of the then Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and also the then Greater Sydney Commission Chief Commissioner Lucy Turnbull<sup>32</sup>.

We call on the NSW Government to carefully consider its engagement with any group or individual seeking to promote increased development and rezonings (especially along the T3 Bankstown Line) to ensure that proper probity checks are undertaken.

**(h) the staffing and future workforce planning, taking into account predicted service demand based on predicted population growth in Western Sydney**

**BUS DRIVER SHORTAGE**

New South Wales is facing an unprecedented shortage of bus drivers. The closure of the T3 Bankstown Line for at least 12 months from mid-2024 will further exacerbate the inability of Transport for NSW to ensure that Sydney has adequate bus services.

The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance is concerned that the NSW Government has no adequate plan nor sufficient funding/resources to implement any plan to transport 100,000 displaced commuters from the T3 Bankstown Line everyday<sup>33</sup> during construction of Sydney Metro Southwest. It is also critical that all bus services provided to replace trains during the 12 month shutdown of the T3 Bankstown Line be fully accessible and fully airconditioned.

If the NSW Government cannot commit to running “StationLink” services similar to the Epping to Chatswood rail line closure for Sydney Metro Northwest construction, this will be a clear example of discrimination against Western Sydney commuters. Commuters also need direct bus services to Central and Redfern (in particular for Sydney University students) during the shutdown of the T3 Bankstown Line.

**(i) any other related matters**

**METRO SOUTH PROPOSAL**

The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance reiterates our position that Sydney Metro Southwest should not proceed, and that new rail should be provided to areas in Sydney currently without rail access such as Southern Sydney (e.g. Sydenham to Miranda via Brighton-Le Sands and Sans Souci).

We support the EcoTransit proposal for Metro Southwest – a diversion of Metro from away from the Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> Office of Premier “GIPA Disclosure Log: Diary entry of a meeting between advisers of the Office of the Premier an Locals for Southwest Metro” <https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/premiers-department/access-to-information/office-of-premier-disclosure-log> [Note: The Office of Premier Gladys Berejiklian and Dominic Perrottet refused to release the diary of Premier Berejiklian on the meeting day (when Locals for Metro Southwest were in the Premier’s boardroom) to substantiate the claim that Premier Berejiklian was not in attendance of the meeting].

<sup>31</sup> Refer to the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA) Submission (Correspondence) for the NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Acquisition of land in relation to major transport projects (2021)

<sup>32</sup> Refer to the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance (SBA) Submission (Correspondence) for the NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Acquisition of land in relation to major transport projects (2021)

<sup>33</sup> Matt O’Sullivan (Sydney Morning Herald) “Rail line closures to force 100,000 commuters a day to catch buses” <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/rail-line-closures-to-force-100-000-commuters-a-day-to-catch-buses-20190718-p528eg.html> (18 July 2019)

<sup>34</sup> EcoTransit Sydney “Metro South” <https://ecotransit.org.au/wp/south-metro-proposal/>

## **SYDNEY METRO “INDEPENDENT” REVIEW**

The Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance expresses concerns regarding the lack of transparency with the Sydney Metro Review<sup>35</sup> conducted by Mike Mrdak and Amanda Yeates.

The absence of any community consultation (especially in lieu of the recommendation for proceeding with the Sydenham to Bankstown conversion being made on 23 June 2023<sup>36</sup> prior to meeting with impacted local Councils on 10 August 2023<sup>37</sup>) puts the adequacy of the Review into question.

Furthermore, the non-publication of the Sydney Metro Review’s stakeholder engagement list, the fact that Mike Mrdak<sup>38</sup> is a patron of the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue (a proponent of Sydney Metro Southwest as seen through the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue submission<sup>39</sup> in 2019 to the NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion, and again with the group’s media release<sup>40</sup> in 2023 celebrating the decision to proceed with Metro Southwest) gives rise to a conflict of interest that raises doubts into the overall “independence” of the Review.

## **SYDENHAM TO BANKSTOWN URBAN RENEWAL CORRIDOR**

We conclude by highlighting the SGS Economics paper titled “Ensuring a liveability dividend from growth: A new Urban Renewal Community Compact” by Patrick Fensham<sup>41</sup> which states there is a “significant shift in the settlement geography of our cities, at the scale proposed, is without precedent, certainly in Australia and probably anywhere in cities in the contemporary post-industrial era. It could be argued that it is occurring without much forethought as to what it means for equity, productivity, liveability and sustainability outcomes”.

Additionally there is an “insufficient current commitment to productivity, liveability and sustainability outcomes in renewal area planning” and that “concerns of incumbent communities where this sort of infill development is occurring are sometimes dismissed as NIMBYISM. Petty complaints about the impacts of modest re-development are often motivated by narrow self-interest”.

“However, for some suburbs the renewal proposals represent a wholesale ‘reworking’ at much higher densities with hundreds of new dwellings per year. In these cases the concerns of communities about what the redevelopment means, how the traffic and transport networks will cope, how street level amenity will be affected, whether there will be sufficient open space and whether schools and other social infrastructure provision will be sufficient, are entirely reasonable”.

---

<sup>35</sup> Sydney Metro Review Terms of Reference [https://www.sydneymetro.info/sites/default/files/2023-04/Sydney\\_Metro\\_Independent\\_Review.pdf](https://www.sydneymetro.info/sites/default/files/2023-04/Sydney_Metro_Independent_Review.pdf) (13 April 2023)

<sup>36</sup> Sydney Metro Review Interim Report Summary <https://www.sydneymetro.info/media/document/35771> (23 June 2023)

<sup>37</sup> Local Councils along Sydney Metro project corridors attended a Sydney Metro Review roundtable and were invited to make a submission to the Review by the end of August 2023. Note: Cumberland Council’s submission to the Sydney Metro Review was firstly put forward as a resolution of Cumberland Council on 16 August 2023 requiring a Councilors’ vote ([http://cumberland.infocouncil.biz/Open/2023/08/C\\_16082023\\_AGN\\_3045\\_AT.htm#PDF2\\_ReportName\\_10300](http://cumberland.infocouncil.biz/Open/2023/08/C_16082023_AGN_3045_AT.htm#PDF2_ReportName_10300)) but Canterbury Bankstown Council made a submission without a resolution of Council.

<sup>38</sup> Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue “Our Network” <https://westernsydney.org.au/network/>

<sup>39</sup> NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion (2019) “Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue submission” (11 October 2019)

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/submissions/66269/0097%20Western%20Sydney%20Leadership%20Dialogue.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> Belinda Wallis (Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue) “Dialogue Welcomes South West Metro Commitment” <https://westernsydney.org.au/articles-and-news/dialogue-welcomes-south-west-metro-commitment/> (1 August 2023)

<sup>41</sup> Patrick Fensham (SGS Economics) “Ensuring a liveability dividend from growth: A new Urban Renewal Community Compact” [https://sgsep.com.au/assets/main/SGS-Economics-and-Planning-renewal\\_compact.pdf](https://sgsep.com.au/assets/main/SGS-Economics-and-Planning-renewal_compact.pdf) (13 June 2017)