

Submission  
No 48

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

**Organisation:** EcoTransit Sydney

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18 September 2023

Ms Cate FAEHRMANN, MLC  
Chair

*Inquiry into Current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney*

via email: [portfoliocommittee6@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:portfoliocommittee6@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

### **EcoTransit Submission for NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Current and Future Public Transport Needs in Western Sydney**

Dear Ms Faehrmann,

EcoTransit is an advocacy group in support of better public and active transport in NSW. We seek to see a sustainable economy and environment that reduces resources used by the transport sector.

The more efficient our economy is, the less damage is done to the environment. Public and active transport (walking and cycling) fit these criteria. Urban freeway development that entrenches prolific car use does not support the sustainability objectives of EcoTransit for either our economies or cities.

EcoTransit advocates improving the local environment of towns, suburbs, and cities in NSW, by shifting transport from invasive modes like the private motor car that produce high levels of air, noise, and water pollution, to less polluting public transport modes. While the town planning paradigms in use in NSW merit closer attention, this submission will be limited to public transport and western Sydney.

#### **EcoTransit Sydney's core proposals for Western Sydney**

Priority 1: Invest in 21<sup>st</sup> century railway signalling network-wide for more frequent and faster services across the entire Sydney Trains Network. The government must investigate the available options now.

Priority 2: Regarding one of the government's core plans for Western Sydney, namely the Sydney Metro West project, EcoTransit holds firmly the view (also supported by Cumberland Council and others), that there must be more stations for Metro West – notably between Parramatta and Olympic Park.

These should include stations at Camellia/Rosehill (interchanging with Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 to Carlingford), and also at Silverwater/Newington (noting the proposed Metro West Services Facility at Silverwater as one potential location). There may indeed be potential for a significant interchange at Silverwater or Camellia for future intercity services (fast or faster rail) to Newcastle and Canberra, but this is beyond the scope of this submission.

See also below EcoTransit's proposals below for enhancement to the IWLR and interchange with MetroWest.

Priority 3: Extend South West Rail Link (SWLR) from Leppington to Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis as an absolute priority. Advantages for this modest approach is that land resumptions would not be as extensive as the proposed Metro to St Marys to the North, which EcoTransit does not support, and no major tunnelling would be required (again, unlike the Northern/St Marys option).

Priority 4: Retain the South West Rail Link (SWLR) services as heavy rail not Metro operations. This includes corridor preservations for extension of the SWLR from Leppington toward Narellan via Oran Park. This greenfield development must be done as part of extending the Sydney Trains heavy rail network, not as a Metro train line.

Priority 5: Minimise, where possible, the need for new tunnelling for these lines in sparsely populated parts of Sydney, as the necessary concrete would represent substantial contributions to carbon emissions in what remain largely greenfield sites.

Priority 6: Build a Y-link between the Main South Line south of Casula to the T8 East Hills line west of Holsworthy (much of this land publicly owned at present, and not used for high-value purposes), to allow Liverpool commuters direct access to the fast services on the Sydney Domestic and Kingsford Smith International Airport (T8 Line).

It is noted that such a Y-link would pass close to the Moorebank Intermodal facility. EcoTransit is not in a position to comment on the public transport implications of that facility but, insofar as the Moorebank Intermodal reduces truck movements in the Sydney basin, it merits our support.

Priority 7: Keep stations to the west of Bankstown open in the long-term. Reinstate Liverpool to City via Regents Park services, a significantly faster service than those that travel Liverpool to City via Fairfield and Granville. Reinstate Bankstown to City via Regents Park services. Investigate strengthening/rebuilding the rail bridge near Samuel St, Lidcombe (the west side of a Y-junction that is inadequately used at present), for direct heavy rail services between Bankstown and Parramatta.

Priority 8: Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1: extend from Carlingford to Epping (via Carlingford Court, potentially underground, and potentially as a 'tram-train' service).

Priority 9: Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2: extend the proposed line from Olympic Park/Carter St to the main western line (T1); while EcoTransit supports the original proposal (Parramatta to Strathfield via Olympic Park), it also believes strong alternatives exist for a light rail terminus at Lidcombe Station, as per the 2022 investigation by Cumberland Council).

Priority 10: Investigate converting the Liverpool – Parramatta (via Bonnyrigg) T-way to rail services [preferably Light Rail Transit]. These services travel through much industrial employment land.

Priority 11: Other 'low-hanging fruit' that EcoTransit believes is vital is to investigate providing second entrances at a number of stations (such as Lidcombe), where doing so would vastly enhance walking catchments<sup>1</sup>. The impending opening of the new concourse at Redfern station provides evidence of the value of such initiatives. This is particularly the case where the station access/egress point is at one extremity of the a station's platform(s).

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<sup>1</sup> [Levinson, David](http://hdl.handle.net/2123/20286) "Catchment if you can: The effect of station entrance and exit locations on accessibility" (2019) Sydney University <http://hdl.handle.net/2123/20286>

Priority 12: Improve frequencies of Parramatta River ferry services such as minimum 30 minute intervals for most wharves and more skip-stop patterns (for lower patronage locations closer to the City) to make the journey time more competitive to driving and other modes of public transportation.

Priority 13: Investigate feasibility of bi-directional signalling on double-track sections of Sydney Trains Network to allow skip-stop operations to reduce travel times and reduce the number of all stations services. For example not all T2 Leppington Line services between Liverpool – Merrylands should be all-stations services, certain services could skip lower patronage stations such as Yennora or Casula were bi-directional signalling to be introduced (subject to analysis of Opal usage data).

Priority 14: Possible enhancements to the Inner West Light Rail (IWLR) and interchange[s] with the MetroWest. This can include a spur line from the Rozelle Bay tram stop across into the new parkland above the Rozelle interchange, passing beneath Victoria Rd (with one or more additional tram stops), and a stop outside the new Metro station at Bays West. The spur line could be extended as far as the Cruise Terminal site.

The western Sydney implications of this initiative include as follows. It would allow for much greater operational flexibility for the IWLR - and while this may be an inner city innovation, it would benefit commuters from western Sydney by enhancing services (and thus the places accessible to western Sydney) on both the IWLR and MetroWest. It would also benefit Parramatta as a destination for commuters outside western Sydney (here, those using the IWLR who would like to access Parramatta and the west. It is noted that they can currently do so by using Lewisham West tram stop and Lewisham train station, but this is not ideal for every public transit commuter).

EcoTransit also notes that this 'spur line' would significantly enhance the operations of the rest of the IWLR, allowing services between Rozelle Bay and Central to be effectively doubled, with two lines feeding into one.

Priority 15: EcoTransit also believes that there needs to be more interconnecting rail lines that don't run into the city or inner city, including an Epping to Hurstville line. While this is also strictly not a western Sydney issue, it is fundamental to improving the operability and resilience of the entire network. Other non CBD-centric possibilities exist for the Sydney Trains network, most of which would have operational benefits for the entire Sydney system including for western Sydney.

Thank you for the Inquiry's attention into these matters. We would be delighted to provide evidence at the Inquiry and/or further information regarding our submission if needed.

Kind regards,

EcoTransit Sydney