

**Submission
No 64**

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

Organisation: Venues NSW
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Ms Cate Faehrmann, MLC
Chair, Committee on Transport and the Arts
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Submission to the Committee on Transport and the Arts Inquiry into the Current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney

Dear Ms Faehrmann,

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission on the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney on behalf of Venues NSW.

Venues NSW cares for five distinct precincts that are home to public facilities within close proximity of more than 80 per cent of the NSW population. Our network includes Accor Stadium at Sydney Olympic Park, the SCG and Allianz Stadium at Moore Park, CommBank Stadium at Parramatta, McDonald Jones Stadium and the Newcastle Entertainment Centre, and WIN Stadium and Entertainment Centre in Wollongong.

We are a major employment, tourism, social and economic engine of growth for NSW. We host sporting, cultural and entertainment events that drive the state's visitor economy. Every event is a major catalyst to surrounding pubs, bars, restaurants and hotels, supporting jobs and creating culturally rich and vibrant local communities.

At our Western Sydney precincts in Parramatta and Sydney Olympic Park, we welcome more than 1.5 million fans through our gates. Ensuring these sporting and entertainment precincts are accessible is critical to fan patronage, the financial viability of the venues and the impact our events have on the local visitor economy. Unfortunately, the current complexities in our transport system and the limited public transport options in Western Sydney make our Parramatta and Sydney Olympic Park venues less accessible when compared to the MCG precinct or other major precincts around the world. For example, the MCG can be easily accessed by two heavy rail stations within a 5minute walk and light rail (tram) stations that stop at adjacent multiple venue entrances.

Proper implementation of metro and light rail transport modes across our sporting and entertainment precincts is a vitally important step toward aligning transport infrastructure with Sydney's global city status. World-class cities are defined by their accessible and efficient public transport networks, and ensuring they are multi-modal at places of mass gatherings contributes to this image. Sydney has already shown the world how well we can organise important sporting and entertainment events and as a result we know that these precincts will grow in popularity and use. There is a strong need to ensure that upcoming infrastructure addresses the challenges that can come with transporting people to these events.

It is our recommendation that the Sydney Metro West and Stage 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail be completed to support accessibility to Western Sydney's sporting and entertainment precincts and the Metro West line be extended east via Moore Park to support Western Sydney residents' access to the SCG, Allianz Stadium and wider-Moore Park, linking the state's two most important and celebrated sporting and entertainment precincts.

Accessible Western Sydney sporting and entertainment precincts

Parramatta has undergone major revitalisation in recent years with the development of CommBank Stadium, the three-hectare Parramatta Square development and stage 1 of the Parramatta light rail. Similarly, albeit more slowly, Sydney Olympic Park, 23-years on from the 2000 Olympics, continues to evolve into a destination of cultural, entertainment, recreation and sporting events with a growing residential population to support it.

Despite the growth of these centres, they, and our sporting and entertainment precincts that reside within them, continue to be underserved by public transport. The delivery of the Sydney Metro West and Stage 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail is critical to ensure these communities are appropriately served by public transport and public infrastructure within them is accessible to all NSW residents.

With each event held at our venues, a different patron demographic travels to our venues. How they travel and where they travel from varies but the current ground transport lacks the flexibility needed to respond, particularly for major events at Accor Stadium where 70% of fans for major concerts and sport events travel by public transport. This equates to up to 70,000 people for a major concert like Harry Styles in addition to crowds attending events at Qudos Bank Arena or other venues in Sydney Olympic Park.

At present, the transportation infrastructure servicing Sydney Olympic Park, is limited to buses and the T7 Olympic Park Line. Fans on the T7 Olympic Park Line are required to transfer at Lidcombe to travel to or from the Parramatta or Sydney CBDs. This results in increased car usage, road network congestion and travel to and from major events at Accor Stadium regularly attracting negative media commentary including after a Matildas World Cup match when thousands of fans flocked to Sydney Olympic Park train station to be met with hours long delays and massive queues due to power supply issues affecting equipment at Ashfield train station.

Public transport options to CommBank Stadium will be better with the soon-to-be-open Stage 1 of the Parramatta Light Rail but the venue will still be predominantly reliant on buses, the heavy rail line and private vehicle usage.

Metro West stations and the extension of the Parramatta Light Rail, in addition to the pre-existing heavy rail lines will provide for a step change in multi-modal transport access to both Parramatta and Sydney Olympic Park and their sporting and entertainment precincts while reducing private vehicle usage.

Making the east easily accessible to the west

The inclusion of a Metro station in the SCG precinct is crucial to enhancing transport equity and accessibility for residents in Western Sydney, reducing private vehicle usage and realising the full potential of this vibrant area.

In 2016, the former SCG Trust commissioned Repucom to undertake a survey of where Sydney sports fans reside and their access to Sydney's major stadiums. The study was based

on 10,000 Australians and tracked their interest in rugby league, rugby union, Australian Rules football and football.

The study showed that 62% of fans are based in the central and Western Sydney, within proximity to what is now the identified as the Metro West corridor. The study also showed that more sporting fans, and particularly fans from the west, attended Allianz Stadium at Moore Park than Accor Stadium at Sydney Olympic Park. It is worth noting this survey did not consider attendance at the SCG nor Sydney Swans home matches, which would further boost the numbers in the SCG precinct.

The three sporting and entertainment precincts also employ over 5,000 people, the majority of which are Western Sydney-based. Many travel between the different venues on the same day when different events are held. Having sufficient transport capability to support employ mobility is crucial to event operations.

By linking Westmead, Parramatta, Olympic Park, Burwood, North Strathfield, Five Dock and the CBD with Moore Park, the Government is ensuring that the Moore Park area is properly utilised, traffic concerns are minimalised for local residents and that Sydney becomes a truly global city with world class public transport that links our major sporting and entertainment precincts.

Thank you for considering our submission.

Yours sincerely

PHILLIP HEADS

Group General Manager - Communications, Heritage and Community