

REPORT ON PROCEEDINGS BEFORE

**PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 6 - TRANSPORT AND
CUSTOMER SERVICE**

SYDENHAM-BANKSTOWN LINE CONVERSION

CORRECTED

At Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney on Wednesday, 6 November 2019

The Committee met at 10:15

PRESENT

Ms Abigail Boyd (Chair)

The Hon. Mark Banasiak (Deputy Chair)

The Hon. Catherine Cusack

The Hon. Anthony D'Adam

The Hon. Wes Fang

The Hon. Rose Jackson

The Hon. Shayne Mallard

The CHAIR: Welcome to the first hearing of the inquiry into the planned conversion of the Sydenham-Bankstown line from heavy rail to metro as part of the Sydney Metro City and Southwest Project. This inquiry will examine various issues including the adequacy of the business case for the project, the suitability of the Metro system, the public consultation process, tendering and planning process, impact on the environment and heritage conservation and the impact on commuters over the next five years.

Before we commence, I acknowledge the Gadigal people, who are the traditional custodians of this land. I would also like to pay respect to the Elders, past and present, of the Eora nation, and extend that respect to other Aboriginals present. Today we will hear from Inner West Council, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, the University of Sydney and a number of community groups and organisations.

Before we commence I will make some brief comments about the procedures for today's hearing. Today's hearing is open to the public and is being broadcast live via the Parliament's website. A transcript of today's hearing will be placed on the Committee's website when it becomes available. In accordance with the broadcasting guidelines, while members of the media may film or record committee members and witnesses, people in the public gallery should not be the primary focus of any filming or photography. I also remind media representatives that they must take responsibility for what they publish about the Committee's proceedings. It is important to remember that parliamentary privilege does not apply to what witnesses may say outside of their evidence at the hearing. I urge witnesses to be careful about any comments they may make to the media or to others after you complete your evidence, as such comments would not be protected by Parliamentary privilege if another person decided to take an action for defamation. The guidelines for the broadcast of proceedings are available from the secretariat.

There may be some questions that a witness could only answer if they had more time, or with certain documents to hand. In those circumstances witnesses are advised that they can take a question on notice and provide an answer within 21 days. Witnesses are advised that any messages should be delivered to committee members through the Committee staff. To aid the audibility of this hearing may I remind both committee members and witnesses to speak into the microphones. The room is filled with induction loops, compatible with hearing aid systems that have tele-coil receivers. In addition, several seats have been reserved near the loud speakers for persons in the public hearing who have difficulty hearing. Finally, would everyone please turn their mobile phones to silent for the duration of the hearing.

KEN WELSH, Team Lead Strategic Transport Planning, Inner West Council, sworn and examined

The CHAIR: Do you want to make an opening statement?

Mr WELSH: As a precursor, the submission that council made to the inquiry was a combination of its two previous submissions on the project's environmental impact statement and on its preferred infrastructure report. In it there are a lot of concerns that are based on operational construction and environmental issues. A lot of those are being dealt with in an ongoing process with Metro at the moment. But the main thrust of council's concern was the expenditure of government resources on servicing an existing passenger catchment rather than putting in a system that could serve a passenger catchment that was lacking. For instance, either putting in a new service which provided better north-south connectivity or filling in some of the gaps in the existing network. That is the key thrust of council's submission.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Will you provide further background about the impacts of conversion in relation to temporary transport arrangements in relation to it?

Mr WELSH: The biggest issues that we see with the temporary transport is the initial timing of some of the possession periods. What often happens is we do possession periods over Christmas for works because there is less commuter demand and we see that as a reasonable thing. The short-term possessions are not so critical and the process we are going through with Metro at the moment is looking at what the arrangements are and they're taking it on board as quite collaborative. The big concern is some of the really long possession periods. When we get further into the construction of the project the long possession periods have the ability to find that we have people who would normally travel on the heavy rail start diverting to their own private transport.

Once you have got people who have moved into their private transport, they are in a little box which is air conditioned with their own sound system, and they are happily trundling along and it is really hard to get them back into public transport. We see the critical thing is how the temporary transport is managed and then that issue of getting people back out of their cars, if they have moved to cars, onto public transport. So getting that mode shift back to public transport.

The CHAIR: In your submission you talk about the cumulative impact of the WestConnex construction, the Sydney Gateway project, and in some areas also will be impacted by construction from this conversion. Which areas are impacted the most?

Mr WELSH: At this stage, the inner west is basically coping it from all directions with the three stages of WestConnex, Sydney Gateway going in, the duplication of the Port Botany line which is part of the Sydney Gateway project and the F6 further south but we are still getting construction traffic down there. I think the key area that is affected by this project is basically from Marrickville through Sydenham, and a pocket around Dulwich Hill. There will be issues as we do some of the upgrades to the bridges on the line all the way to Bankstown. But for the residents, those in Marrickville, Sydenham, Tempe are the ones who are really suffering from this cumulative impact. St Peters has already copped it with the WestConnex interchange. Sydney Gateway, we believe, the environmental impact statement will be on exhibition later this month so we do not know what the full implications of that are.

The Port Botany rail duplication is on exhibition now and the issue we have found there is it talks about what is happening the Bayside area but it does not talk about how the construction traffic is going through inner west. We assume that because we really have three places we can cross the railway line it funnels all of that construction traffic to Unwins Bridge Road and Bedwin Road to Gleeson Street at Sydenham station or further up to St Peters. It creates these pockets and everything has to channel through there so that is why that area is really coping it.

The Hon. WES FANG: The first part of your testimony was that Inner West Council's preferred solution would be to service new areas that do not currently have a rail line?

Mr WELSH: Yes.

The Hon. WES FANG: In the second part you said that there is too much development happening and you do not want any more disruption, and you are concerned about the disruption. Surely you must recognise that if we were to put in a new line, and not convert a line, it will have a much greater impact on local residents? The first part of your answer is outside the scope of the second part of your answer. How do you balance that.

Mr WELSH: That is one of the biggest challenges. Being a local government transport planner, I have to balance the local needs but I am also trained to look at the regional needs. We have a hub and spoke rail service.

Everything is focused on the city, yet we have the Greater Sydney Commission which talks about three cities. By doing what we are doing with an upgrade of Sydenham to Bankstown we are again reinforcing that hub and spoke network. So we are funnelling everyone into the city to then travel out. If I am to look at the long-term regional benefits then the pain of getting something in that gives us a better north-south connection has to be weighed up against the pain of our residents in that. It is a dilemma.

The Hon. WES FANG: Surely coming to this inquiry and saying that the inner west is coping it from all sides because we are developing WestConnex, we are developing the NorthConnex, the F6 connection and all that traffic is funnelling through the inner west, but the long-term view is that that will ameliorate a lot of the traffic problems which the inner west is suffering. You come here and criticise that the infrastructure is being built and because of it the inner west is coping it from all sides yet you are saying you need to have a long-term strategic view and that is what this Government has done by putting in all that infrastructure. The submission is of Mr David Birds—but you are obviously listed—did you or David write the submission? Who had input into it?

Mr WELSH: I will answer the last question first. David Birds is the group manager. He is two managerial steps above me.

The Hon. WES FANG: Yes.

Mr WELSH: I am an operational transport planner. The first submission was prepared by a different transport planner. The second submission was prepared by both that transport planner and myself and then I simply pieced the two together and sent the letter under David Birds' signature because he is the group manager.

The Hon. WES FANG: On the top of the third page of the submission there is a dot point that says:

Given the appalling record of the State Government in managing infrastructure we also fear there will be a construction blowout.

One, that is a very subjective statement. Two, I do not know that it is backed by any evidence. It paints a very concerning overview about the thought process that has gone into the submission. When you come to a hearing—

The CHAIR: Order! Mr Fang, can you ask a question rather than making a statement?

The Hon. WES FANG: Can you justify the statement in the submission?

Mr WELSH: What you are quoting is a council resolution, which was not necessarily in the officer's report. You are asking me to give a critique of a resolution point that was not necessarily—I have not seen the officer's report—in the letter of submission. You have quoted council's two sets of resolutions. That is what you are quoting. I did not say there was any statistical data behind that from an officer's point of view.

The Hon. WES FANG: This could be a purely political statement?

Mr WELSH: All I can say is that it was the resolution passed by council.

The Hon. WES FANG: I raise serious questions about that statement. Why should we not raise serious questions about the rest of the submission?

Mr WELSH: You are entitled to raise any questions that you want. I am here giving you the technical data.

The CHAIR: You talk about the potential impact on the availability of affordable housing. I think that is a really interesting point. Could you elaborate on that?

Mr WELSH: What we are concerned about is we have not been able to see a detailed business case so we do not really know what the land use responses will be. As you increase public transport accessibility there is naturally a demand from developers to say you have got better accessibility here we should be moving to the highest business use, which is often seen as residential. As more residential goes in it is tending to be the inner west experience, relatively high cost residential and we are having a lot of trouble setting a platform where we can get affordable housing. We are trying to have diversity in our demographics but with large components of high rise apartments it is very hard to get that affordable housing in.

The CHAIR: Some might argue that an increase in housing leads to more affordable housing from a market perspective. Can you talk through why that is not the case?

Mr WELSH: Sure. On the surface you would tend to think the more housing there is supply and demand comes into play so housing prices should drop. That has not been the experience in the inner west. What we have found is the more housing that goes in prices are still going up. There is increased demand because the inner west

is such an attractive area to live in. We are getting migration from other areas to the inner west. As a result our affordable housing is becoming depleted.

The CHAIR: Although there may be more housing stock overall within the inner west we are seeing people potentially being forced out of the area because of the increase in prices?

Mr WELSH: Potentially people are being forced out. Some are making the choice, they are saying, "I can make a killing on this, I will move out". But, what we are finding, particularly in some of the areas like Annandale that traditionally had student housing and housing for nursing staff and healthcare, that housing is getting much more expensive. We are not getting those professions in those areas now.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I want to follow-up on some of the comments you made around the fact that it has been the experience, not only in the inner west but in the NorthConnex development, that associated with the development of metro has been development of the corridor along the metro specifically for residential. That was, in fact, an initial part of this proposal from the Government even though there has now been a step away from the Sydenham to Bankstown urban renewal corridor proposal. What is the current status of, for example, in your area of expertise, a transport lived experience in the inner west? How congested are your roads already? How difficult is it already for inner west residents to get around their local streets, their local suburbs? How would you be concerned that development associated with the new metro line would exacerbate those pre-existing problems.

Mr WELSH: It is sort of a twofold situation. Our LGA is a very large LGA with very diverse land uses. Some areas are extremely congested. If you look at what is happening in the central parts of Marrickville, in this area that we are talking about particularly, because we only have three crossing points, we get a lot of congestion in those areas around Sydenham station, for instance, during peak periods or Bedwin Road and Unwins Bridge Road. As you move further afield the congestion is not as bad. Some of the areas near Dulwich Hill have reasonably nice amenity to the neighbourhoods. Again, in Balmain the peninsular is protected. It does vary enormously across the whole local government area. If populations were to increase and if you were to have more residential the critical thing will be how you manage to get a mode shift to public transport. Because the metro is here those three crossing points that I talked about, if we let everyone have their car and encouraged them to drive their car during peak periods we would have massive congestion problems.

You could combat it by putting in stricter parking controls. Having kerbside and on-site parking that was more restrictive so we reduce car ownership. It has to go hand-in-hand with the public transport. The dilemma we face is that as you increase population densities the Australian travelling public tend to want to keep their car, so we increase the number of cars. We are under pressure from developers to make sure we provide parking in developments. As soon as we do that we are giving that flexibility to people to drive. It is how you can incentivise; let them have the car perhaps but not drive to work.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: You use the word "incentivise", but in fact some of the options you describe there are reasonably punitive. I completely understand the point you are making but from the council's point of view the reality is that unless reasonably punitive measures are put in place to essentially try and force people out of cars and on to public transport the congestion issues around this particular area that is proposed for development are only going to get considerably worse?

Mr WELSH: If we have a free-for-all and there is unlimited parking it will get worse. It will get to the stage where the traffic is unbearable so people have no choice but to catch public transport. If it reaches that stage though we have a significant environmental and amenity loss for the neighbourhoods and we are trying hard to protect our communities and the amenity of those communities.

The CHAIR: Just on the congestion point, has council seen the temporary transport arrangements during the construction phase and what is going to happen when that temporary transport comes into play?

Mr WELSH: We are in the process of working with metro on those temporary transport arrangements. We have looked at the impending ones that will happen this Christmas. There is a massive amount of bus movement that will be happening. Sydenham station in particular will be a very critical point to manage. As I said, this period is a fairly short period. It will be a good way of testing it. The issue is convenience and how the public perceive getting on to buses. They are used to jumping on a train, they know where it is going, they know how it is going.

With the temporary transport arrangements it is not like we are just replacing a train with a bus that stops at every station. There are going to be some buses that have to be express buses. For instance, some of the buses from Wollongong will go straight through. It is not just Sydenham station that is being closed. It means there will be possession periods where the Illawarra line—Hurstville trains—may not be able to get through for certain

periods of time. It is a very complex arrangement and it is how well that that can be managed that the travelling public can readily read it and work out where they are going to go. If it is not very clean, very legible, very predictable people will get in their cars.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I have another quick question. I wanted to ask about the deletion of the south-west greenway. As we were talking about previously, trying to provide options for people to get around that are not travelling in vehicles. I understand the original project included more active transport links and the council submission makes reference to the fact that that has been removed in the subsequent preferred infrastructure report. The council submission indicates that you would like that to be reinstated and I invite you to comment further on some of the work that council is already doing to promote active transport and why this would be an important piece of the puzzle if the Metro were to go ahead.

Mr WELSH: Council, over the next five years, is completing the GreenWay, which is the Iron Cove to Cooks River link. That will be completed within the next five to six years as a fully shared path and environmental corridor. We were extremely disappointed when the south-west greenway was dropped. We saw that as another critical link. It fed into the GreenWay. It provided us with great east-west connectivity and virtually all of it was going to be in the corridor. By losing that it now means we have to start finding alternatives on the street.

We are working with Metro, and Metro have been working on walking and riding strategies. I believe that that strategy will progress to the stage where they are talking to us in detail some time before Christmas. At this stage we do not know exactly what that means. We are assuming we may get some in corridor, but I do not think it will be the majority. The critical issue was that by dropping the bridge works the south-west greenway could not fit any more. So we see a critical missing link in that corridor that was an opportunity to really get it in there and make a difference to the network.

In terms of what council is doing, as well as the Greenway we are in the process of building a whole new bicycle plan. Because we were three amalgamated councils they were slightly divergent. That will be on exhibition within about 12 months. We have been working closely with the State Government getting some new regional bike routes. There are about three that we are working on at the moment, that we are looking at completing over the next three years. We see active transport as one of the critical things council can make a difference to movement patterns on. So we are pursuing that with as much vigour as we can.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Can you elaborate on your comment in the submission about the absence of community development—perhaps elaborate further on some of the issues that you see associated with that?

Mr WELSH: Council was concerned that initially it was a transport and land use response. The land use response was pulled back. As we build the transport response it again comes back to this likelihood that there will be demand for increased densities. We feel that as we get increased densities we must have increased social infrastructure. At the moment we are low on open space. We are low on community facilities. So anything we do to increase population without increasing the supporting infrastructure is going to put a critical gap in what we can do to service our community. That even includes education. The response we got with Parramatta Road corridor, for instance—the revitalisation of that—is that they are not going to put in additional school sites; they are going to intensify existing school sites. That does cater for the educational need but it immediately then places burden on our open space. The schools do not have playgrounds so they have to use our open space.

At the minute our open space ratio is quite low and we are spending a lot of time, energy and resources maintaining and improving them. So greater loading is going to put more burden on council's resources. There is an example in Haberfield. We have a school where kids have to walk across the City West Link to get to the playing fields that they use. We see all of these as being tied in together when the populations increase in the area—in the corridor in particular.

The CHAIR: Has council done any surveys or got any evidence in relation to the community sentiment about the Metro conversion?

Mr WELSH: Not that I am aware of.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Thanks very much, Mr Welsh for your submission. Can I ask you a question in two parts. First of all the issue of the construction; a lot of the submission seems focused on how that works. Secondly, if we could wave a magic wand and not have those issues, what are the issues with the route? I will ask about the construction.

Mr WELSH: Sure.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: You referred to an officer's report to council. I know these are publicly available but would you be able to provide a copy of that to our committee?

Mr WELSH: Certainly.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Thank you. In relation to the process that you are going through at the moment, could you describe the process from the council's point of view, of interaction with these government agencies to discuss the transition phase, if I can refer to it as that? Also, any suggestions as to how that could be improved?

Mr WELSH: I really appreciate you giving me a heads up on the summary of the questions. That is great, thank you. Yes, I will make sure we can get those. There will be two officers' reports—one for each of the submissions—so I will send that through.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Thank you.

Mr WELSH: In terms of the ongoing liaison and consultation, Metro has been extremely cooperative. I am spending a lot of time—I cannot even ballpark it—on it. We have monthly meetings with three of the contractor groups. We have a combined Metro meeting—called the TTLG, which is the Traffic and Transport Liaison Group—which gives us an overview of the whole Metro project. We also have specific meetings on topics or studies. So on the walking and riding strategy that we just mentioned we are working quite closely with Metro and meeting with them roughly monthly on that one. There are a whole series of ongoing discussions. I believe our engineers are also working with them on the construction traffic management plans and on the temporary transport arrangements around the stations. So there is probably eight—maybe 10—meetings a month where council and Metro are across the table. We have a really strong relationship with several parts of the Metro team so the liaison is ongoing. If an issue arises we rarely have to take it to a higher level. It can usually be resolved at one of these meetings.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Is that being conducted by the councils as a group or by councils individually?

Mr WELSH: As far as I am aware, the only one that includes all the councils is this TTLG—the Traffic and Transport Liaison Group. At that one are all councils on the whole route—from Tallawong to Bankstown—are invited to attend. You do not always have complete representation there but you will have several of the councils there. The other meetings tend to be very focused on specific areas—design meetings on an individual station, so it will only be our council. The only other meeting that tends to be multi-council is the walking and riding meeting we have, which will include Canterbury-Bankstown and Inner West. It does not extend into the city. If the issue is only for one council area there will only be one council but if it is an overall briefing it will be both.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Have you, by any chance, seen Sydney University's submission to this inquiry?

Mr WELSH: No I have not.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: You are probably aware that they have been very active about the fact that are an employment precinct and—

Mr WELSH: Yes.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: From the council's point of view, have you thought about those issues, because you have residents from one council travelling into that area? I just wondered if you had any thoughts on that.

Mr WELSH: Yes. This comes down to that dilemma I have. As a local government planner I am trying to look after my community's needs, but I have to recognise that transport does not stop at a border. We are in consultation with Sydney University and the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital on what is happening in the collaboration precinct around Camperdown. We are currently working on an integrated transport strategy with them.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Would you say that you are on the same page as them?

Mr WELSH: Because I have not seen their submission, I cannot guarantee I am. But the overview that I get—that they see that they need a strong public transport node there—is definitely the case. We were pushing for improved public transport along Parramatta Road. With our Metro West review, we are saying there should be connectivity from the Bays Precinct or Pyrmont station down to the Camperdown hub. We see that as a major

employment centre. When the WestConnex dive site in the Camperdown triangle—Pymont Bridge Road and Parramatta Road—is finished with, that is a major development site so we can see a lot of potential in there. As far as I know, yes, we are on the same page.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Putting aside the construction phase, what do you see as the core issues post-construction?

Mr WELSH: I think one of the biggest things is we really need to be reviewing our surface transport network. We are getting increased frequency at the stations on Sydenham to Bankstown. We are getting improvements on the western line, we are getting the west metro in, but it does not appear that we are responding by changing the bus network. I think it is fairly critical that we need to be looking at a network-wide analysis, so that is the first thing. There is potential for traffic congestion. If you do increase frequencies at, say, Dulwich Hill station, there is potential people are going to want to drive there and park there. The car park at Dulwich Hill is very small, so you are then potentially going to get overflow parking into the residential areas. So we need to be looking at that as an issue and then, as I said, the potential demand we are going to have from developers to provide increased population densities around the stations.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Do you have a view about Redfern station and its future?

Mr WELSH: Not specifically. I do not know enough about the data relating to Redfern because I do not work for the city. I have not seen the origin-destination data on it.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: You said that there would be a need for these possession periods to be done in a clean way. Does the Inner West Council have concerns that it will not be done in a clean way?

Mr WELSH: At the moment, the way that negotiations are proceeding, I think Metro are putting a lot of time and energy into getting it right. The advantage of just having these small possession periods at the start sort of lets us put our toe in the water and see what is working and what is not. Part of the reason I have concerns is some of the possession periods that happened on the western line early on presented a lot of issues. This is earlier this year when Newtown station was being bypassed, for instance, and you would get off at Redfern station and there were a fleet of about eight buses there and you had to find which bus you were going to catch.

We had a lot of concern from residents that they just had no idea what was happening. I think Metro have learnt a lot from that. I do have concerns over the longer possession period, though, that even if you get the wayfinding right and the information right, we still may have people diverting back to using their private cars. It is the convenience: A train carrying, say, 3,000 to 5,000 people versus a fleet of buses—you cannot be sure you are going to get a seat on the first bus. The other factor is just the sheer number of buses that will be required and the congestion that could result in around some of our critical stations, like Sydenham.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Morning, Mr Welsh. Sorry I missed your opening statement. I will not give you a hard time. If the mayor was here we would give him a hard time.

Mr WELSH: I appreciate that.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Sending in professional staff to give us advice is appreciated from the council. If the politicians come in, then we will have a barney about the politics. In answering a question from the Hon. Catherine Cusack, you referenced the bigger picture benefits of this rail conversion and the metro itself. Was that in the consideration of the council when it adopted these motions about the metro, the conversion and the broader transport benefits to metropolitan Sydney?

Mr WELSH: I believe it was. I was not at council the first night that it was presented. The second one—the preferred infrastructure report [PIR]—I was, and there was a lot of concern that money was being spent on servicing an existing catchment, where there are numerous gaps in the network that could better serve or that, as I mentioned before, we have very little north-south connectivity in the regional network—say, putting in a link that went Hurstville to Kingsgrove to Ashfield.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: We would have another inquiry and more councils complaining.

Mr WELSH: Yes, but getting that north-south—because there was, in the debate, discussion of getting better north-south connectivity rather than extending into the existing area.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: In those two reports you supplied to us, there was discussion around the macro benefit to Sydney metropolitan area of the—

Mr WELSH: I believe so.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I am not holding you accountable for resolutions of council, but resolution number 2 in the letter of 25 July states:

Council suggest the State Government build new rail services to suburbs that don't currently have them rather than converting existing commuter rail services ...

That does not understand what we are trying to achieve with the CBD metro: a separate system to the heavy rail to unlock the congestion, particularly at Sydenham rail interchange, to free up capacity on that line as well as the western line, to unscramble the knot that is the overburdened heavy rail system. That resolution does not appreciate that is the effort.

Mr WELSH: No, because this report was specifically looking at Sydenham to Bankstown. It was not saying there was a problem with north of Sydenham; it was saying from Sydenham to Bankstown you are servicing an existing population. You could still come into Waterloo, the existing route coming to Sydenham, and then you could go off somewhere else.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: But you will see the Government's submission and its argument that all the research it has done, all the analysis it has done is that that is the best one to convert to break the logjam of capacity into the city and the city circle and the western line. It is critical. Any other one would not have achieved the outcome that this one will do. It is a very carefully considered decision.

Mr WELSH: Having not seen the business case, I cannot say definitively that it looked at what would happen if you took that line from Sydenham due west, for instance.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: A new line, you mean?

Mr WELSH: Yes.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Can I clarify that? You do not have access to the research that the Hon. Shayne Mallard is referring to?

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: No, it is a submission.

Mr WELSH: The submission, yes; the Government's detailed research, I do not necessarily have access to.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: We can ask about that tomorrow afternoon. But it is well publicised; there is even a video that I conveniently put up on my webpage today, if you want to go to shaynemallard.com.au. It is only 45 seconds long but it shows the tracks at Sydenham at the moment: total spaghetti junction.

Mr WELSH: Yes.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Trains logjammed trying to get through. One accident somewhere in the system, and that is the big crunch point. What will happen with the metro totally clears it out. It is a big transformational change to the rail system. It is a generational change for the city.

The CHAIR: Is there a question coming?

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I am just saying. As you probably know, I was a councillor in South Sydney and Sydney. I know impact on local communities of infrastructure that benefits the State or the city. But the council needs to consider also the broader issue of transport. That is all I am getting at. I think these resolutions from the council—not your fault—are a little narrow-minded.

The CHAIR: That was a statement, not a question.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: This inquiry is a statement.

The CHAIR: I remind members to ask a question.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Would you like to comment on that?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Can I ask a question arising from that, that I think springs from that? These projects are enormous; they are once in a generation. At the officer level, you actually have to make this work. Everyone has got a job, like politicians—noisy job. Can you assure us that at the officer level, things are proceeding in a constructive way so that the community can rely on that work being done?

Mr WELSH: At an officer level, we are doing our best to get the best outcomes for the community.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Do you feel that the metro is approaching it in the same spirit?

Mr WELSH: It is hard for me to judge Metro's approach because I am only at an interface position, so I am not sure how they are going.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: At that level that you are at, I mean.

Mr WELSH: I think that a lot of the metro officers have the best possible intentions. I think they are operating within a constrained environment, which is natural. They have fiscal constraints; they have time constraints. I think they are trying to do their best and I think the south-west GreenWay was an example. We lost the greenway but we are working with them to try to get some sort of solution.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Is there anything more that could be done at that level to make things easier for people?

Mr WELSH: That is the second part of the question that I did not answer of yours, isn't it?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Yes. We would love to hear any suggestions that you have because everyone wants this to work.

Mr WELSH: I cannot think of anything more off the top of my head that could be done simply because the council does not have the resources to put more time into it.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I did mean to ask you about that. This is a big strain on councils—all of this planning and submissions. You are here today. Are there any additional resources that are available to assist with that?

Mr WELSH: Not in council. We are already strapped to put the time into dealing with all of the State Government elements that we are dealing with. At the moment we have so many State infrastructure projects that our engineers and planners are almost fully occupied—

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: And your council always fights them.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I realise that it is all coming down onto the same group of people. I am quite interested to know if you have got the resources that you need to do the job properly.

Mr WELSH: Within council?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Yes.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: We all want more.

Mr WELSH: Yes.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: This is really important. It is really important because—

Mr WELSH: We are currently going through a restructure. I am not sure how many resources we have. However, we are currently strained to be able to service all of the projects.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I have two questions. Just to follow up on that, the ratepayers of councils that are not in the inner-west that have not had to deal with WestConnex, this proposal and all of the other things that have gone through are not having as much of their council officers' time diverted to managing the fallout of State Government projects. That is correct, is it not?

Mr WELSH: Correct.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: There is a massive burden on the ratepayers of the inner-west in terms of the amount of time you and your fellow officers are having to spend on the impact of State Government projects in your backyard.

Mr WELSH: Yes.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I want to clarify: It is the view of the officers and the council as a whole that the benefits of this projects do not outweigh the significant costs and impost on your community. That is the case, isn't it?

Mr WELSH: The council's submission and resolution specifically states that. From my point of view—I cannot speak for the other officers, obviously—the metro to Sydenham has achieved a lot and alleviates a lot of issues. I am not convinced that the pain points after that are warranted by the improvements we will get.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Just to be clear, that is within your council boundaries?

Mr WELSH: Correct.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Can you elaborate in terms of the specific measures that you might apply in terms of making that assessment—for example, journey times or carrying capacity? What are the metrics that you are using to assess the relative benefit or disadvantage for the project?

Mr WELSH: Part of it would be journey times. Yes, metro will improve journey times. But it is also balancing that against what you could achieve through improved track works and sorting out the spaghetti junction that we recently spoke about. We could be fixing that up, improving the signal coordination work and maybe putting in improved innovative technology to our existing rolling stock that would let us have shorter headways without going to all of the expense of metro and then using that to service a new area and providing a north-south link.

The CHAIR: Thank you. That is all we have time for. The questions you took on notice in relation to the reports must be returned within 21 days. The secretariat will be touch with you in relation to that. Thank you very much for your time.

Mr WELSH: Thank you.

(The witness withdrew.)

PETER OLIVE, Interim Convenor, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, affirmed and examined

ROYDON NG, Co-Convenor, Restore Inner West Line and Save T3 Bankstown Line, sworn and examined

The CHAIR: Welcome and thank you for appearing this morning. I invite you each to start by making a short opening statement. If you could keep it to no more than a couple of minutes that would be fantastic.

Mr OLIVE: I will go first. My brief presentation will be in two parts. The first part relates to the elements that will affect people on the Sydenham to Bankstown line to the west of Sydenham. The other part will deal with how we see the overall picture for Sydney's rail network with the introduction of the metro, especially the Sydenham to Bankstown component. We see the Sydenham to Bankstown component of the metro as a reduction in services for our community. The primary reasons for that include a loss of direct access to eight current stations to the east of Sydenham on the Bankstown line, with particular concern for the direct loss of City Circle services, especially Town Hall, Wynyard and Circular Quay.

As you can appreciate, they are significant stations in the Sydney network and the people on the Sydenham to Bankstown line will be losing, for the first time in about 100 years, direct access to those stations. The seating in the rolling stock will be reduced from the current number of 895—that is on the Waratah and Millennium trains—to 378 per train. That is a loss of seating per train—I underscore that and appreciate the significance of that. People will obviously be standing a lot more. Sydney University students will be incredibly affected. I heard the previous speaker being asked about the submission from Sydney University. Obviously they are very unhappy about the impacts this is going to have on students who want or need to access Redfern Station. Students who are coming between Sydenham and Bankstown will be forced to change trains once.

Students coming from beyond Bankstown who want to access Sydney University will be forced to change trains twice. That may necessitate them going all the way in to Central Station and then coming back to Redfern. Finally, a major point that affects the people between Sydenham and Bankstown is the possessions during the conversion process itself. We have calculated it to be about a year. It varied between the environmental impact statement [EIS] and the preferred infrastructure report [PIR]. In total we have come up with a figure of about a year's worth of possession. Then in 2024 there will be the biggest possession, which, by our last understanding, will be about six months. That is going to be a really significant impost on the people of the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor.

Going to the bigger picture, members of the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance [SBA] support rail. We like rail and we see the benefits of rail. We have a rail service. We do not want to see a \$1 billion-plus investment going on replacing a train line that is currently there, when we think there are some areas, as we have said incessantly, and suburbs that do not currently have train lines. This section of this project may be \$1 billion or it may be \$1.5-billion—I do not know—but that money, in our opinion, could be very much better spent somewhere else. It would be a wonderful idea for people along the Sydney to Bankstown line if the metro got to Sydenham and then went somewhere else like Maroubra Junction or down to Miranda. Or if the money were taken and put into the west metro. That would certainly relieve a lot of pressure on the Sydney network.

The SBA also believes in a 30-minute city, the idea that was put forward by the Committee for Sydney. To have a 30-minute city—a 30-minute Sydney, which we need for the twenty-first century—you cannot have the current spoke-and-hub system that Sydney currently has. To have such a network, you have to have cross-radial links, as the general manager of the Inner West Council said—something from Hurstville to Kingsgrove, to Campsie, to Burwood that would link across those spokes. But what we are getting with the conversion of the Sydney to Bankstown line to a metro is the intensification of a spoke and hub. It is an intensification of that model, not an alleviation or a step away from it. We are cognisant of the big picture for transport in Sydney. We love trains and we want to see the people of Sydney have the benefit that we have from trains.

Mr NG: I firstly start by saying that I believe the New South Wales Government should be ashamed of itself for removing T2 Inner West Line's City to Liverpool via Regents Park train and City to Bankstown via Regents Park train service in 2013. This was despite Transport for NSW warning that the cuts would significantly impact on commuters west of Bankstown, while not being able to prove that the cuts would actually improve reliability. Now the nine stations west of Bankstown will lose the final direct train to the city, with Sydenham to Bankstown being downgraded into a metro with gap-fillers that make it slower than the existing T3 Sydney trains line. Now 19,000 commuters every day from Berala, Regents Park, Sefton, Chester Hill, Leightonfield, Villawood, Carramar, Birrong, Yagoona will all face significantly increased travel times, having to interchange

twice to reach the City Circle, Redfern, St Peters, Erskineville. The first interchange is at Bankstown and then another interchange at either Sydenham or Central.

The New South Wales Government deemed the Bankstown Line shutdown not of public interest in its decision to invoice me \$1,170 in Government Information (Public Access) Act [GIPAA] fees regarding the *Temporary Transport Plan*, days before its public release in September 2019. The plan was only released after I put in my GIPAA, despite Sydney Metro promising to release it for public exhibition in 2018 and also several years beforehand with public consultation. None of that has happened. Minister Constance should stop making videos for developers posing as Locals for Metro Southwest.

Minister Constance should apologise for calling Western Sydney residents who want a train to the city "criminals". The North Shore suburb of Chatswood, in Premier Berejiklian's own electorate, will have 35 trains to the city per hour once metro opens. This is in stark contrast to the disadvantaged communities west of Bankstown that will have no trains to the city whatsoever. It is time to restore Inner West Line: Liverpool via Regents Park, save the T3 Bankstown line and bring back the express trains to Lidcombe, Auburn, Granville and Liverpool. I would like to table these documents. Thank you.

The CHAIR: Can you tell us what the documents are?

Mr NG: Yes. I table a letter from four former State Rail executives, John Brew, Ron Christie, Bob O'Loughlin and Dick Day. This letter busts the myth of the Bankstown bottleneck. It also shows that the Government claim of improving capacity is false. These former rail executives also strongly state that taking Sydenham to Bankstown into metro reduces reliability of the overall Sydney Trains network. I also have some statistics from last year's PIR submissions report, which show the strongest opposition to Sydney Metro Southwest from the nine stations west of Bankstown, particularly from Berala and from Regents Park. I attach a link to a *YouTube* video that was produced by Locals for Metro Southwest, because Locals for Metro Southwest are not really locals; they are just developers who want to up-zone Canterbury to Bankstown.

I also attach my group's submission to the PIR report. I also have the 2013 customer timetable, the stakeholder engagement plan. This is a Transport for NSW document. Transport for NSW admit that the original 2013 cuts to the inner-west line, the removal of Liverpool via Regents Park, will have significant impact on commuters west of Bankstown. This is an article I have written for City Hub called "Breaking the Bankstown Line", in which I explain how the case for Sydney Metro Southwest, in the lead-up to its planning approval, seems to have some elements that were faked in the sense that the 2017 timetable change seemed to have deliberately put in more un-air-conditioned trains and old trains on the Bankstown Line. With the metro promising the new train, it seemed that the Government deliberately tried to worsen the train service per se before getting community approval and support for the metro.

I would also like to table the Sydney Metro document. This diagram is also in the Transport for NSW submission. The T3 Bankstown line currently goes all stations from City Circle, Sydenham through Bankstown to Lidcombe and to Liverpool. The diagram in the Transport for NSW submission and also on the Sydney Metro site says T3 only goes to Cabramatta. Is this the Government foreshadowing a further cut to the Bankstown line at Cabramatta? My article also goes on to explain why taking the metro from Sydenham to Miranda, instead of the F6, is a much better option. I also table an article from the *Sydney Morning Herald*, "Sydney Rapid Transit"—which is now Sydney Metro—"to cut direct city service for commuters west of Bankstown".

I note that this article was written in 2015 and my group has been going on since 2013 because we want the Liverpool via Regents Park train restored. It has been nearly five years since the Sydenham to Bankstown metro was announced, but the Government still does not provide any certainty for commuters east of Sydenham and especially for the nine stations west of Bankstown, about what is going to happen to train services. There is real community concern in areas around stations such as Berala, Regents Park, Sefton, Birrong, Yagoona, Chester Hill, Leightonfield, Villawood, Carramar that the ultimate plan is to shut down the stations, as the Government has proposed a further extension of metro from Bankstown to Liverpool. Also the 2056 Future Transport Strategy does not show the nine stations I have just listed on the actual transport map. I have some questions that should be answered based upon the Transport for NSW submission.

The CHAIR: That is probably not a document to table. Keep going and we will come back to it, if that is all right.

Mr NG: My apologies. Please ignore that from the package. I also mention that I have a photograph of Andrew Constance appearing via video at the Locals for Metro Southwest event last year. There is no ministerial record of the Locals for Metro Southwest having any prior meeting with Mr Constance. I tried a Government Information (Public Access) Act [GIPAA] request for this video from Minister Constance; his office said it did

not exist. Locals for Metro Southwest is essentially the front for the Government pushing overdevelopment from Canterbury Bankstown—

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Point of order: First of all, Mr Ng has said that the Minister should stop doing videos for developers. The Minister has never done a video for developers. That should be made clear and I think he should withdraw that. The allegations against another community group should not be allowed to be made. I think that each group—and I have crossed this path myself in these debates—stands on its own merits. He should focus on his submissions and not the alleged allegiances of other groups.

The CHAIR: Thank you. If Mr Ng could keep that in mind, we will just continue—

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I suggest he needs to withdraw that the Minister, Andrew Constance, makes videos for developers. That is an outrageous allegation and he refutes that.

The Hon. WES FANG: Is the map of the grassy knoll in here as well?

The CHAIR: Thank you. Apologies for the slight delay. I ask if we could be very careful with any adverse mentions. As a rule, from the basis of our committees we would prefer not to have to go through a situation where an adverse mention has to be then dealt with subsequently to allow the person to whom you have referred to come back and make a statement refuting. If you could rephrase, or in continuing if you could keep that in mind that would be very helpful for the Committee.

The Hon. WES FANG: Point of order: I think the Hon. Shayne Mallard had requested that the witness withdraw. I would suggest that is probably appropriate.

The CHAIR: My advice is that is not something that would ordinarily be requested. I think we should move on. If there is any adverse mention in the tabled documents we will consider removing it before publication.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: That includes the community group that was adversely mentioned?

The CHAIR: Yes, both the Minister and the community group.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Thank you, Madam Chair. I accept your ruling.

Mr NG: I would like to talk about some of my challenges and experiences with freedom of information, especially—

Mr OLIVE: We are tabling the documents here, Chair.

Mr NG: Yes. I have got—

The CHAIR: Sorry, what is that document?

Mr NG: This is a summary of how I believe Hong Kong police—

The Hon. WES FANG: Point of order: I am not sure that this relates to the current inquiry.

The CHAIR: The tabling of documents should refer to the evidence that you are presenting here today.

Mr NG: Yes, I am speaking about the Mass Transit Railway [MTR].

The CHAIR: Is that document one that you have produced?

Mr NG: I obtained this document about crime statistics on the Mass Transit Railway from Hong Kong MTR.

The Hon. WES FANG: Point of order: I do not believe that is within the terms of reference of this inquiry.

The CHAIR: Which of the terms of reference is that pertaining to, Mr Ng?

Mr NG: Paragraph (g) and also paragraph (l) "any related matter"—safety on MTR, on Metro.

The Hon. WES FANG: I would dispute that.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: To the point of order: This is an opening statement, as I understand it?

The CHAIR: No, we have gone past the opening statements—well, I guess it is at the end of the opening statement to table these particular documents. How many more documents are there?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: This is a very unorthodox way of—

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Madam Chair, can I suggest that maybe to expedite and allow us to actually question the witness that he tables the documents and allows us to look at them and—

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Determine whether or not—

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: —determine at a later date whether they are published or not published.

The CHAIR: Would that be acceptable?

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Then we can just get on to questions. I am just trying to expedite the matter in terms of allowing us to question—

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: All this commentary that is coming with the tabling of documents is very—

The CHAIR: The commentary is an explanation as to why it is being tabled. I think there are only three more documents?

Mr NG: One, really. I will just quickly speak about this one.

The CHAIR: Please do.

Mr NG: I did a freedom of information request to Hong Kong police and the Hong Kong Transport Department for crime statistics on the Hong Kong—

The CHAIR: So it goes to the safety of—

Mr NG: Safety, yes.

The CHAIR: If you could table that, we will consider.

Mr NG: Also, I believe that the Hong Kong Government, having turned over the information to me in 15 days without charging me a cent is a big contrast to how Transport for NSW has dealt with my GIPAA applications.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much.

The Hon. WES FANG: Thank you both for coming in today. I really appreciate you giving up your time to speak with us. I want to start by taking you to your organisations themselves. Mr Olive, can you please talk about how your organisation is formed, how the membership and the policies are developed and what structure and model you use to keep membership?

Mr OLIVE: We are an amalgamation of about nine community groups all the way along the corridor. Those are the Marrickville Residents Action Group, Save Marrickville, Save Dully, the Hurlstone Park Association, Cooks River Valley Association, the Mudcrabs, Keep Our Area Suburban and the Canterbury Racecourse Action Group. They are local community groups all the way along the corridor that came into being when the State Government put forward the two major projects—one was the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor urban renewal strategy and the other, of course, is the Sydenham to Bankstown Metro. As you are probably aware, that engendered a lot of concern in the community and these organisations came up. Eventually it was deemed a reasonable strategy to come together as an overarching group called the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance.

The Hon. WES FANG: How do you monitor membership? What model rules can you use?

Mr OLIVE: We have regular meetings—I would say once a month—where we discuss whatever issues there are and whatever strategies we are going to undertake.

The Hon. WES FANG: How many members do you get to a meeting?

Mr OLIVE: It would be about 10 members. They are generally representatives of each of those local groups, or members from those local groups.

The Hon. WES FANG: How do you determine policy? Is it democratically elected or is it proposed and then agreed? How do you determine how you would form a submission to a committee?

Mr OLIVE: We got this together with people from those various groups who had expertise in various areas. I was endorsed to oversee that process. People submitted their components. This was determined by a meeting of the group. I will say that we are not an incorporated group; we are a group of community members who are concerned about what is going on in our community. I think we are a legitimate group and I think—

The Hon. WES FANG: No, I am not questioning your legitimacy. I am just trying to work out how—

Mr OLIVE: I am just making a statement about what I think we are, to make the situation clear in your mind. We are a group of community representatives from community groups that have their own constitutions—some have their own constitutions, some have their own email lists. I think you will find we have been quite effective in actually changing Government policy, particularly with regard to the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor urban renewal strategy. The State Government was willing to cede back to the two new local councils the planning controls. It obviously sees us as a significant or important or a legitimate group and I think that is not an unreasonable approach to take to us.

The Hon. WES FANG: You can take this on notice, but would you mind tabling the minutes of the meetings that you may have had for the last 12 months? Would that be possible?

Mr OLIVE: Yes, I think we can do something like that.

The Hon. WES FANG: Mr Ng, in a similar vein, could you explain to me how your group was formed, the membership, how you develop policy and what model rules you operate under?

Mr NG: Thank you, Mr Fang, for your question. I would like to also acknowledge one of the partner groups in the campaign, The Battler from Auburn. They have been quite instrumental and supportive of saving the T3 Bankstown Line over many years and Restore Inner West Line Liverpool via Regents Park. I will take our membership numbers on notice. I will have to look at up. I have been focusing on getting the submission to this inquiry up.

The Hon. WES FANG: Can you give the Committee a rough number, just out of curiosity?

Mr NG: We have about a 3,000-signatures petition and in recent weeks have collected just another 650 signatures.

The Hon. WES FANG: All those people would identify themselves as members of your organisation?

Mr NG: They are willing supporters.

The Hon. WES FANG: With voting rights?

Mr NG: Can I talk about how we work?

The Hon. WES FANG: Yes.

Mr NG: I am one of the co-conveners of Save T3 Bankstown Line. I meet with the other conveners and secretaries of the other groups involved, such as The Battler. We work on and talk about how we come up with our strategy and what particular areas of public transport improvement and how we support the Sydney Trains Network.

The Hon. WES FANG: I will tell you what my concerns are. My concerns are that while you may purport to be speaking for 3,600-odd people now, you do not actually have a large membership base and a large supporter group. To be purporting to do something else—

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Point of order: Is this a question or a statement?

Mr OLIVE: Or a slur?

The Hon. WES FANG: I would like to ask two questions before I hand over. Is either of you a member of a political party? Why have your groups not linked together?

Mr OLIVE: I am a member of a political party but I am not sure what the second part—why have Mr Ng's group and my group—

Mr NG: Who are you asking?

The Hon. WES FANG: Both of you. Are you both members of political parties?

Mr NG: No. I am not a member of any political party.

The Hon. WES FANG: Given that you have an alliance with a number of groups, how come Save T3 has not been included in that?

Mr OLIVE: The Sydenham to Bankstown corridor alliance was set up to deal with stations between Sydenham and Bankstown. The Save T3 people are stations beyond Bankstown.

The Hon. WES FANG: Right.

Mr OLIVE: That is the primary reason though we do have very good relationships, I must say, with Mr Ng and his group.

The Hon. WES FANG: So there is a working relationship there.

Mr OLIVE: Yes, absolutely.

The Hon. WES FANG: Would you mind putting on record what—

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Point of order.

The CHAIR: I will hear the point of order.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: This line of questioning really is not elucidating anything for the Committee.

The CHAIR: In the evidence.

The Hon. WES FANG: I think it is elucidating quite a lot.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: I think Mr Fang has made his point. He is challenging the legitimacy of the two witnesses.

Mr OLIVE: Exactly.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: That is fine. I think we can move on now.

Mr OLIVE: I mean, if you think we are not legitimate I suggest you go down to the old Department of Planning and ask them whether they think their responses to our actions were responses to a legitimate organisation or not.

Mr NG: Yes.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Point of order: In terms of public audience comments, Chair you may not hear it but there is coaching. Comments from the public gallery should not be happening.

The CHAIR: I remind members of the public that they are to remain watching in silence. Thank you very much. We will move questioning to someone else and we will come back to you later on, Mr Fang.

The Hon. WES FANG: Sure.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Mr Ng, I want to ask you about your understanding of the immediate proposals in relation to how those nine stations will be serviced. What is your understanding of the Transport for NSW proposal around what will happen to those stations?

Mr NG: Thank you, Mr D'Adam. In the immediate future it appears that there will be some Sydney trains services west of Bankstown but what I have been told is that everyone will have to either get off at Lidcombe, change at Bankstown, or even go backwards to Cabramatta. For the commuters at Sefton, Chester Hill, Villawood, Leightonfield and Carramar to get to Lidcombe also requires changing at Birrong. For example, to go from Chester Hill to Circular Quay you would either go Chester Hill to Birrong, change trains; from Birrong to Lidcombe, change trains; from Lidcombe to Circular Quay, that is three trains on what used to be one direct train on the Inner West Line Liverpool via Regents Park service. The alternative option is to take the train from Chester Hill to Bankstown and then from Bankstown to, say, Sydenham on Metro and then change at Sydenham or Central from the Metro onto another City Circle service. So, again: one direct train now from west of Bankstown will become three separate trains once Metro South West comes in.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Will they just operate like a spur line and with what kind of frequency? Has there been any communication from Transport for NSW about the frequency of that service or how that will practically operate?

Mr NG: None whatsoever. We have not had any information about frequency of service. We have been asking for about the last four or five years. I am honestly a little disappointed that it has been four years and we have not had any more clarity of information. There has even been a suggestion that these train services west of Bankstown will become only four-carriage services.

The CHAIR: Both of your organisations or groups to talk about the restoration of the Inner West line. On the assumption that the T3 conversion goes ahead and is put in place, how would it improve matters if the Inner West Line was restored?

Mr NG: It would mean that stations west of Bankstown would have at least some direct train service to the city via Inner West and Strathfield.

The CHAIR: Has your group looked into the feasibility of restoring that line in terms of is it possible?

Mr NG: Yes it is. I would like to reference my personal submission, which is actually No. 102. I note that also in the documents presented, the suburban Sydney Trains map, if you look at the current Sydney Trains map the T2 Inner West line goes all the way to Parramatta. The Inner West Liverpool via Regents Park was taken out in 2013 and stopped at Homebush. The reason was that supposedly there was not enough space between Homebush and Lidcombe. No additional tracks have been put in since 2013 or 2017 but then, for some extraordinary reason, the Inner West Line T2 now is able to go from Homebush all the way to Parramatta through Lidcombe, so there is no lack of track capacity. I should also refer to the Temporary Transport Plan for this Bankstown Line shutdown. The direct train on T3 is operating from Central to Campsie through Lidcombe, Regents Park, Bankstown, so it is turning left at Lidcombe.

The CHAIR: I am sorry, let me get this straight. In the temporary transport arrangements they are using the Inner West line for the T3 trains.

Mr NG: Yes.

The CHAIR: Okay. I understand.

Mr NG: And also in the Temporary Transport Plan it does mention the Central to Liverpool via Regents Park train on the Inner West Line, essentially. There is no reason why the T2 Inner West Line Liverpool via Regents Park cannot be restored now.

The CHAIR: That would restore a direct link for those nine stations west of Bankstown?

Mr NG: Yes.

The CHAIR: Interesting. We can ask the department about that.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Thank you both for coming in. Mr Olive, I just want to clarify your opening statement. You referred to the reduction in the number of seats on a train. To tease that out, you also gave us the seating capacity comparison for the Metro. I do not have that off the top of my head.

Mr OLIVE: It is 895 existing.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: On heavy rail?

Mr OLIVE: Yes, for the existing train, one train.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Is that an eight-carriage train?

Mr OLIVE: Yes, that is right. It is existing rolling stock. There are 378 for the Metro.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: But you acknowledge that at the moment on the Bankstown line there are, on average, four heavy rail trains an hour—one every 15 minutes.

Mr OLIVE: Outside of peak hour, yes.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Yes. Under the proposed Metro there will be 15 trains an hour, one every four minutes.

Mr OLIVE: Yes. I get the point you are getting to.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: The service capacity per hour goes up dramatically.

Mr OLIVE: There is still a decrease by our calculations from 53,700 to 51,000.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Per?

Mr OLIVE: That would be per hour, per day.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: But acknowledging the Government's motivation is service, one train in every four minutes is a big difference to one heavy rail train every 15, on average, outside of peak and there is capacity up to two minutes.

Mr OLIVE: If I could just take issue with your initial presentation. As I said, in peak hour there are eight to 10 trains running down that line every hour. So they go at about five minutes and nine minutes intervals. So that gets them through in that hour.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: On a timetable, assuming there is no issue?

Mr OLIVE: Sure.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: This is a turn up and go Metro?

Mr OLIVE: One could argue that you are turning up and going if you get there within five or nine minutes. I just do not want to be comparing apples with pears, I want to compare a granny smith with a Jonathan. What you are trying to get at is there will be this incredible increased service.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Huge increase in service.

Mr OLIVE: In peak hours there will not be that huge an increase in service or frequency. I acknowledge there will be if they do run it every four minutes, there will be an increase in number.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: That is the commitment.

Mr OLIVE: At the moment they are not running four an hour in peak hour, they are running every five and nine minutes respectively.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: And no capacity to increase that. You commented about the stations.

Mr OLIVE: I am sorry, in the Government's submission it says that in the Sydney Metro, together with signalling and infrastructure upgrades across the existing rail network there will be increases. So I assume that there would be potential for increases if they were to bring in the signalling and infrastructure changes. The figure is not exactly right.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: The digitalisation project is huge. I return to your opening statement. You criticised the fact that passengers currently on the Bankstown line can get a train directly to the city.

Mr OLIVE: Yes.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: You say the Metro line will not connect them to the exact locations that you are talking about.

Mr OLIVE: Correct.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: The Metro line will connect them to Central? Platforms are being built at Central.

Mr OLIVE: Absolutely. I did not say that Central would not be—

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Town Hall has a serious safety overcrowding risk and is closed regularly. One of the solutions to that is to remove a passenger service from Town Hall and put a street station Metro train right next to it and, in fact, there will not be an underground connection for overcrowding and safety reasons but you will be able to connect on the surface of our wonderful city. That service is there and that Pitt Street one is not far from Martin Place. And then there is a new station for our city and for employees from people in Bankstown who might work in IT or banking which is at Barangaroo. This is an additional service that goes through to the North Shore if they work there. I put it to you that that is not a significant disadvantage, a loss of access to our city, it is an improved access to our city.

Mr OLIVE: I can see your argument. I think there is some cogency in it and I think that what we are talking about here is the difference between being forced to use Sydenham as a transport interchange or being able to just access it when one likes. I think there will be a significant downgrade for people between Sydenham and Bankstown and beyond Bankstown—and this is quite ironic—if the Metro does go along all the way to Bankstown. It would be absolutely fantastic for people on the Bankstown line if the Metro stopped at Sydenham because then they just access all the stations as they currently do. The rest of Sydney could use the Bankstown line as it currently does and we could just hop off, if we wanted to, and access those stations that you said are going to be built. That would be absolutely fantastic. I would even go out to Tallawong but that would be my choice and I would absolutely see that as an improvement. What I would see as an even greater improvement is if they took the tale end passed Sydenham and took it to Maroubra Junction because I grew up out there.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: What about Bankstown to Liverpool.

Mr OLIVE: It is very difficult to get there by train.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Future governments may well do that. I think Metro is on the table for expansion.

Mr OLIVE: I see there is some cogency in what you are saying.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I do not think we are far apart.

Mr OLIVE: As I said in my presentation the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance is pro-rail.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Metro is rail.

Mr OLIVE: To the extent that you are building new rail, we support that. But to the extent of converting rail, we do not support that.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: You both seem to be well researched on public transport. But globally door-to-door transport planning is at the forefront of transport planning. You spoke about hub and spoke and Mr Ng spoke about direct lines not being connected but the thinking is how to get a different door to the train station or we heard earlier from an inner west planner about cars, ideally cycling or active transport and then modern transport now, hub and spoke system, three cities for Sydney, means you have to change the mode to transport. If that means heavy rail to Metro rail or even Light Rail in the city, that is the thinking all the way to Copenhagen, London, and cities in China they are all doing it? Do you acknowledge that?

Mr OLIVE: Changing trains, yes.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Door-to-door and transport interchanges.

Mr OLIVE: Absolutely we acknowledge that but as I said in my introduction I do not think that by converting the Sydenham to Bankstown line from one form of rail to another form of rail, with a concomitant densification along that corridor that will occur, despite the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor Urban Renewal Strategy being scuppered, it will still occur if the line goes through, but what that does, does not do what you are saying we should have for the twenty-first century. It just ingrains and keeps in place the spoke and hub nature of Sydney's network.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I do not think you were present when I answered that with the transport planner about the broader metropolitan issue and I will not go through that again.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I want to ask more about the experience of people who live west of Bankstown. Obviously there has been some suggestion that if the Sydenham to Bankstown Metro does indeed go ahead, despite the best efforts of advocacy from groups like yours, there has been some questions as to why indeed the Metro stops at Bankstown and why the Metro does not go out to Liverpool. Do you have any comment on that or indeed or have you had any conversations with Transport for NSW about the option of extending the Metro itself to Liverpool, for example?

Mr NG: Once again I refer you to my personal submission No. 102 and also I believe the Sydney Metro City and Southwest Environmental Impact Statement [EIS]. The original plan for Sydney Metro Southwest was to take it all the way up to Lidcombe. The option of converting the Inner West Line from Central to Homebush was also considered when Sydney's Rail Future was drawn up around 2011-2012. So one of the reasons that my group believes that the real reason why the Inner West Line was cut at Homebush, and the Bankstown Line cut at Lidcombe in 2013, was actually early works to prepare for that for that full section of the line to be replaced with Metro.

Once the detailed planning was looked at in the EIS I believe it was decided that it was too complicated to take the Metro west through Birrong because of the Sefton junction as there are freight trains. So that is the reason why I believe Metro right now is Sydenham to Bankstown. It should be noted that the announced Metro extension to Liverpool is not via the existing T3 line which runs through Chester Hill, Sefton et cetera. It is via a new corridor probably under Bankstown Airport to Liverpool. So that new Bankstown to Liverpool extension does not address any of the concerns from the nine stations that lose trains to the city.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: My second question is to ask for more detail about the associated development that is likely to follow the Metro development. I make that "lightly" comment based on the experience of the north-west Metro which certainly did see quite a lot of land use development along the Metro corridor. Whilst you acknowledge that the Sydenham to Bankstown urban renewal corridor is in a hiatus at the moment, if the Metro goes ahead it is quite likely that there will be additional development along the line. What is the current lived experience of people in the areas that you represent?

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: How congested already are your roads, your schools, your hospitals? You are a community group, you represent the community and I guess I would like a little feedback on how

congested your lifestyles already are and the potential impact of more development on those areas that are already seemingly bursting at the seams?

Mr OLIVE: To the first part, the lived experience, it is quite a dense area. I live in Marrickville and it is quite dense, especially the closer you get to Sydenham. There is a lot of traffic, there is a lot of construction that is going ahead under the Marrickville local environment plan 2011, which has now been incorporated into the Inner West local environment plan. That development is going ahead right now. That development is to take us up to 2031. People who came out and said—not members of the community per se, but people like the administrators of the two amalgamated councils—council will not be able to provide the parks, the infrastructure and whatever, if the Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Corridor Strategy goes ahead in conjunction with the metro.

They are not nimbys, they are appointees of the State Government. The Department of Education said that it doubted it could meet its legislated requirements to provide education for students if the Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Corridor Strategy went ahead in the form it was proposed in 2015. That is not a nimby saying that. That is the department of education saying that. We feel confident that whatever we are experiencing now in terms of density—and if you do not think there is any just come down Illawarra Road or go to Carrington Road near Tempe station and look at the traffic around peak hour and you will appreciate that there is significant congestion. We feel confident that we know that if this does go ahead, if it would have gone ahead there would have been a greater increase in the congestion.

I think that following the logic of the State Government putting these two plans in tandem that is what they see as an improvement to rail and the densification that would necessarily go hand-in-hand to justify that increase in rail. The logic is they have taken away the Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Corridor Strategy to go forward with the metro. The logic is that they have to get the densification around it to justify the spend on the metro. I have said in here the metro is a Trojan horse for densification but it is the densification that they hope will pay for the construction of the Trojan horse.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I want to clarify the comment I made earlier. When I was referring to Town Hall station I said "serious safety concerns", of course I did not mean "safety", I meant "over crowding" concerns. Obviously safety is very carefully managed. The words were "over crowding concerns."

The CHAIR: I have a couple of questions. When we talk about losing the direct connection, particularly those stations west of Bankstown, what does that change look like? When they have caught the heavy rail to Bankstown and they get on to the metro is there a walk involved? Do we know from the proposals what that change looks like?

Mr NG: One of the interesting things is that the design of Bankstown station has not been finalised. What is interesting is that the art work that has been mocked up in the PIR does not actually work with the Government's own proposal. The Government has proposed an end to end interchange where the metro stops at the eastern end of the existing Bankstown station and the Sydney train stops at the current platforms. Then I believe the Bankstown Council, then administrator, said that it would take up to 450 metres to walk from one end of Bankstown station down to the metro end of the platforms.

That is the walk for everyone getting off the Sydney Trains to the metro. That takes time. That would also mean very likely walking alongside narrow edges between the platform edge and the building itself. The buildings are in the middle of the platform which means that everyone has to walk around the sides of the buildings. You have a massive crowd getting off the Sydney Trains and walking hundreds of metres down to the Sydney Metro platform. That is one interchange. For many commuters they have to do another interchange at Sydenham or central as well. That increases the travel time substantially.

The CHAIR: Are most of the people on the T3 line commuters, students, what do they do? Is there people studying or working on the trains at the moment?

Mr NG: The Bankstown Line is full of many diverse communities including young families, the elderly, students and university students as well. Many students take the train to Redfern for Sydney University. My experience a few years back, when I went to UNSW, to avoid the crowds at Central you would take the Bankstown Line to St Peters and take a bus from St Peters out to Kensington and Randwick. It is not just Sydney University students impacted, UNSW students are also impacted.

The CHAIR: Some of the submissions—I read everyone of them and I want that on the record—were saying that the line is used a lot by students with heavy bags and people who are commuting with their laptops. At the moment they are able to sit down on the train and work and use that time effectively with work or study.

Under this conversion proposal they will be standing up for a huge amount of the time unable to use that commute time effectively and also with this built-in walking between and having to change. Do you think that it would be fair to say that the conversion would lead to a reduction in effective commuting time?

Mr NG: Yes. It will make the commute travel experience much worse, especially for those west of Bankstown, and reduce the commuter comfort and mean that public transport is a less attractive option.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: That is not the Sydney Metro Northwest evidence.

Mr NG: Mr Mallard, we do not need to change two to three times on the Metro Northwest.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: The demand for Metro Northwest is huge.

The CHAIR: My final question is we heard discussion about the number of trains and the capacity on the current line versus once it is converted into metro. We have heard a lot about the digital signalling upgrades. I know that recently we had upgrades at Chatswood of the waratah fleet to allow three minute trains, which is quicker than the four minutes proposed by the metro. Is it a suitable proposal to upgrade the signalling along the T3?

Mr NG: Yes, signalling beats metro.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I have a question. I am from regional New South Wales with no public transport at all. When you say that the travel experience will be much worse, can you please define for me what you mean by "much worse", particularly in terms of coming from my perspective from no public transport at all? I want to understand what "much worse" means.

Mr OLIVE: It is a relative concept.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: It means changing a train, is that "much worse"?

Mr OLIVE: It means that at the moment you can catch a train from those stations west of Bankstown and go all the way to Redfern. If you are a student you get off and go to the university. Once the metro goes to Bankstown if you are from the stations beyond Bankstown you will have to get off at Bankstown, catch another train, get off at Sydenham or central and then go back to Redfern and then go to the university. From the perspective of who currently can go from A to B on just one train, it is obviously a downgrade—

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: According to the university that is 400 students.

Mr OLIVE: Yes, I have used them as an example, but there are other people who will have their services downgraded in a similar way even though they are not university students.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: And then there will be people who can go to places they cannot get to at the moment. Is that correct?

Mr OLIVE: Sorry, say it again.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: There will be other commuters who will benefit because of the stops and the through service that you will get. So there will be different destinations that will become available to them.

Mr OLIVE: That is right. As I said to Mr Mallard, if the train were to stop at Sydenham that would actually be a boon for people on the Bankstown line because they would have an extra line to go to the places that you are just identifying. That would be absolutely fantastic.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: The definition of "much worse" is like having to change trains.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: It is obviously subjective.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: It is subjective, and that is important. That is why I really want to understand what "much worse" means.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: I want to ask a question about this argument around untangling the impact on the City Circle and the justification around the selection of the Bankstown and the T3 line as the candidate to disconnect, effectively, from the City Circle. I wonder if you can offer some comment about that argument around untangling. I note in the submission from Tania Mihailuk MP that she talks about the number on the Bankstown line per hour going through the City Circle. It does not seem like a significant number. Perhaps you might offer some comment around that argument.

Mr OLIVE: For sure. In the New South Wales Government's submission the Government says:

Sydney Metro, together with signalling and infrastructure upgrades across the existing rail network, will increase the capacity of train services entering the Sydney CBD from about 120 an hour today to up to 200 services beyond 2024.

If you take the number of trains that are coming in just from the Metro itself—at one every four minutes; 15 an hour—that is 30 trains coming into the CBD per hour, just from the Metro if it were to stop at Sydenham. As you said, in Tania Mihailuk's submission there are 10 trains coming into the city from Bankstown. That is 40 trains. But if you were to send the Metro to Bankstown you would have to subtract those 10 trains out and you would be back to 30 trains from the Metro itself. But that leaves the number between 120 an hour and 200 an hour. That leaves 50 trains still not being accounted for in the conversion of the Sydenham to Bankstown line or the Metro. So there must be 50 trains out of the 80 trains that are able to come into the CBD as a result of the signalling and infrastructure upgrades. I do not believe the New South Wales Government's submission has successfully argued that it is the Metro that is the significant component in the increase in services through the CBD; it is these other things that will be the significant component.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Could there have been a greater benefit if another line had been selected—say the East Hills line or the Illawarra line?

Mr NG: The original plan for constructing North West Rail was heavy rail—Sydney Trains standard. In the Metropolitan Rail Expansion Program [MREP], the original idea was to take that and link that up with the South West Rail Link through a second harbour crossing to Sydney Trains standard and then to the East Hills lines, as you mentioned, out to Leppington. The original plan before the Metro agenda high-jacked the public transport agenda was for North West Rail to go through as Sydney Trains heavy rail through to South West Rail in a big line. Bankstown Line has become a dumping ground because the Government wants to take the Metro out somewhere.

The CHAIR: Can I ask a final question in relation to that point about what is "much worse" or what a worse commute looks like? If that additional walking between lines adds another five minutes to your journey in the morning and in the afternoon—an extra 10 minutes a day, an extra 50 minutes every week—it adds up to a couple of days every year of less time that you would have had otherwise with family or studying or doing whatever. It is two days less leisure time. Would you say that that additional five minutes on a commute would make it a considerably worse transport option?

Mr NG: Having to make multiple interchanges must make it worse, especially considering that the stations west of Bankstown used to have two direct lines to the city and once Metro comes in there will be zero. We have gone from two direct lines to zero.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much for your time. In relation to the questions you have taken on notice, the secretariat will be in touch. There will be 21 days to provide them.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

WALLY MEHANNA, Chief Executive Officer, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, sworn and examined

JASON ARRAJ, Board Member, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce, sworn and examined

WES BROWN, Member, Locals for Metro South West, sworn and examined

ROBERT CZERNKOWSKI, Member, Locals for Metro South West, sworn and examined

The CHAIR: Welcome to our new witnesses. I invite you to start by making a short statement. If you could try to keep it relatively brief—around a couple of minutes—that would be great.

Mr ARRAJ: Wally will be making a statement on behalf of the Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce.

Mr MEHANNA: Madam Chair and honourable members, thank you for inviting us to appear before you today on behalf of the Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce. Since the creation of the chamber, we have been connecting people, empowering entrepreneurial spirit, and elevating this great area as an ideal destination—an amazing destination for study, for living, for employment, and of course for doing business.

The chamber represents more than 300 businesses in the local area. These range from small family-owned businesses through to much larger organisations employing many hundreds or thousands of people like Sydney Metro Airport Bankstown and Western Sydney University. Today, we represent the voices of these 300 plus businesses and the thousands of local workers they employ together with those workers' families. Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce members support the conversion of the Sydenham to Bankstown line to Metro. We hope that soon the line will be extended from Bankstown to Liverpool. And one day soon we also hope to see a new Metro line, as outlined in Future Transport 2056, from Norwest via Parramatta and Bankstown to Kogarah.

The Chamber works closely with Federal, State and local government of all political persuasions focusing on real issues that affect and impact our region economically and socially. The Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce is a strong supporter of the conversion of the Sydenham to Bankstown line to Metro. By providing a Metro service which is independent of the Sydney Trains network, service reliability and frequency will be significantly increased. This offers the potential to attract additional investment and employment to the area, and assist local business, which will enhance the prosperity of the region. Indeed, we are already seeing additional investment in Bankstown in anticipation of the Metro conversion.

Last year the new Flinders Centre, a nine-storey office building, was completed adjacent to Bankstown Sports Club. It was very quickly fully occupied. Western Sydney University will open a new world class vertical campus in Bankstown in 2022, contributing to the revitalisation of the Bankstown CBD. Vicinity, the owner of Bankstown Centro shopping centre, has a major redevelopment in planning. And the newly rebuilt Bankstown RSL has recently opened and a wave of revitalization at Bankstown Airport is transforming the area into a "business park and family leisure destination". Metro rail is a modern, frequent, safe and reliable mode of travel popular in many cities around the world. Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce members support and welcome its introduction to our area.

Mr BROWN: Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about community opinion toward the Sydenham to Bankstown rail line conversion to Metro. I am a 10-year resident of Belmore. I am raising a family in Belmore and enjoy the strong sense of community in the local neighbourhood. I also appreciate immediate access to Belmore railway station and the current rail network. My family use the current T3 rail line daily during the working week. The current rail line, as those who regularly travel on it will know, is slow, inconvenient, often unreliable and, above all else, unsafe when travelling with young children and prams. The heritage sign outside Belmore Station proudly states its creation dates back to 1895. It often feels the rail service reflects the era that Bankstown line was first built. Having recently travelled on the newly built Metro Northwest, I can tell you I am filled with excitement at the prospect of our community receiving the value of a new twenty-first century rail service and the benefits afforded a community when new infrastructure is built.

With this in mind, I am bemused and confused as to why a small number of politically motivated people are trying to exclude the residents of my suburb from this exciting opportunity to benefit from twenty-first century infrastructure. New infrastructure benefits everyone in the community, not just a few. I only ask why should our community miss out on this? Politicians claiming nobody wants this is simply untrue. Offer someone something new that is better than what they already have, and more often than not they will happily upgrade. This is the case with the local residents I know that are frequent users of the current T3 rail service. I have here a photo of my

children on the new metro, looking out the driverless window as the train enters Chatswood station. Our community does want the conversion to metro. We want to be part of the future. My children want to be part of the future, not stuck in the past. Thank you.

The CHAIR: Thank you. I remind witnesses not to use props. If there are any documents that you would like to table—

The Hon. WES FANG: We are not in the Chamber.

The CHAIR: No, it is also a rule of committee inquiries. If there is anything that you want to table at any time—any documents that you are referring to— please do let us know and we can facilitate that. I wanted to take the representatives of Locals for Metro Southwest to your submission and, in particular, paragraph 11. You are talking there about the overwhelming support from the community. In paragraph 11a you have got a quote and then, in brackets, "community wants it". I had a look at the report you are quoting from and in the report you have picked out the middle paragraph. I am happy to share this with you, but you have quoted the report so I am sure you would have it. Above the line that you have quoted, it refers to 32 submissions supporting Sydney Metro and 340 submissions objecting to Sydney Metro. Then it says 61 submissions support the preferred project and eight submissions object to the preferred project; so it is talking about a secondary question. In light of that, how can you say that the overwhelming majority of those submissions support it when we clearly have 340 submissions against?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: If I may address that, there are a number of things that we did coming up to the process where we are now. Having attended various meetings in the area—for example, the local member organised the meeting about development and Metro Southwest. So, yes, when I went to some of those meetings I did, indeed, see that the demographic cross-section of those people tended to be older and tended to be, to be honest, against. I was a little surprised by that. But as we organised into Locals for Metro Southwest—before, we were just local groups—we did some surveys of people going onto the trains. We asked them the question, "Do you want a metro?" I am not sure if you have that, but we had about 7,000 people saying, "Yes, we want a metro." I do apologise; the evidence may not come from the document that you have got, but we have had that through our other activities.

The CHAIR: Can I ask why that one statement was cherry-picked out of this? It does make it look like the submissions were in favour of the project, when actually 340 submissions were objecting. Why was that entire quote not taken? It looks very much like you were just trying to prove a point.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: No, I think if you take the evidence as a whole—submissions are not the entirety of community opinion.

The CHAIR: But you are referring to submissions in your evidence. This is evidence to a parliamentary inquiry where you have pulled out one part of a paragraph which actually talks about most of those submissions being opposed—

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: My apologies.

The CHAIR: —to try and say that the community is actually in favour of the project.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: Saying that this community is in favour of the project is not the same as saying the majority of submissions is in favour of the project.

The CHAIR: You say:

11. The Submissions Report identified overwhelming support for the Metro Southwest Preferred Infrastructure Project, as below:
 - a. "61 submissions supported the preferred project and eight submissions objected to the preferred project" (community wants it)

Are you saying that does not imply that because of that one line from the paragraph that you have pulled out of this report—you are saying that you did not put it in there to show evidence that the community wants this project? Because that is what it says in your submission.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: The paragraph you say was left out—sorry, could you repeat?

The CHAIR: The dot point that you have pulled out is the second dot point of three.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: Yes.

The CHAIR: The first dot point says that 32 submissions supported Sydney Metro and 340 submissions objected to Sydney Metro. You have not included that part. You have then included the second dot point, which talks about people's responses to the preferred project. It says 61 submissions supported the preferred project and eight submissions objected to the preferred project. Clearly, taken out of context that one bullet point makes it look like the overwhelming amount of submissions were in favour of the metro as a whole, when the bullet point above clearly states that is not the case. I am asking why you cherry-picked that.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: My apologies. I did not put the document together. I am replacing my neighbour's son, who actually put it together. I will admit that point.

The CHAIR: Thank you. It does look misleading.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: My apologies for that.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: I might direct my questions to Mr Brown and Dr CZERNKOWSKI. You can thank the Hon. Wes Fang for this line of questioning. How many members does your organisation have?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: At our most recent meeting—sorry, I was not at the most recent meeting. The most recent meeting I attended had about 300.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Is it an incorporated organisation?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: No, we are not incorporated. We started, to elaborate, as separate groups of neighbours. We started in Canterbury—about 11 or 12 of us on my street and the adjacent street. I have a friend over in Belmore who was together with a group of his. Once we had put in the original parliamentary submission some while ago, some other landholders in the area contacted us. So it is largely an informal unincorporated entity. You have to understand, we do not have the money to run any big campaigns or anything.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: It is interesting that you say that, because I have seen your website, which is, in fact, quite schmick and does purport to be running quite a significant community campaign. There is "Sign up to our petition, come to our rally, contact your MP". In fact, of all of the loosely associated community groups that we come across as parliamentarians, yours seems reasonably well funded and organised. Where does the funding for this actually quite substantial-looking campaign come from?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: Firstly, if I may, a website is not particularly expensive or hard to prepare. Secondly, we are a variety of people—of landholders. Primarily the ones that I am familiar with are residents who actually live in houses. Some of the landholders who have joined us are larger; they own blocks of land. We have not put any money in personally, but some of the other landholders have. A website is not an expensive thing, ma'am.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: What kind of money does your organisation have?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: None of that money is flowing through the organisation. We are a loosely structured network. There are different people putting that up.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Who paid for the website?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: I do not know, to be honest.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I really do not think this is a valid line of questioning.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Yes, every campaign has a website.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: To question the credentials of an organisation is fine, but asking where their funding is coming from or who paid for a website is a bit too far.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: It goes to the question about political influence. I think it is absolutely appropriate and within the terms of reference.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Then ask that question.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Ask him, "Are you connected to the Liberal Party?"

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: We will get to that if we are allowed to pursue our line of questioning.

The CHAIR: I ask members to come to the point.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Are you members of a political party?

Mr BROWN: No.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Are you directly involved in real estate or property development and associated industries, such as architecture or construction?

Mr BROWN: I am not, no.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Are any of the members of your association?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: My next-door neighbour's son is an architect.

Mr BROWN: There is an architect I am aware of, yes.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Were the people who funded the website and are funding the rally, the petition—does that funding come from those sources?

Mr BROWN: I do not know.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: We do not. The rally was communicated to us; we arrived. I have to say, to be honest, some of the people at the rally, to my mind, seemed a little bit too smooth. It does not change the message, though. We are residents; we want change.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I am not doubting that you live in a local area. I absolutely understand that you do. I guess what has been suggested is that the element of the community that is particularly interested in this project is the element that would look to financially benefit from development associated with the new metro line. We are wondering if that is the motivating factor behind the organisation of your group.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: In order to answer that can I state why we started the entity that became Locals for Metro Southwest. In 2016 we had these two very smooth guys coming round my street and adjacent streets who asserted that they were developers. They were making offers to us. My neighbour two houses down and I decided that we had two options. We could either ignore the whole thing or not. The downside would be that we get picked off. The first person who sells loses and the last person standing gets hounded out. We decided to organise ourselves as a group. That is basically where we come from. There are other landholders on our block, which is the area that I know, where there are investors.

There is a group of three people next to Aldi and they have participated. They contacted us after our first submission. But we basically started as a group of 11 residents who owned 12 properties—one is split. We got involved because developers will exploit us and we want to deal directly. We want to be able to control the process so that there is no middle man taking a chunk. Some of us are happy to sell up, go elsewhere and stop dealing with the hassle. Some of my neighbours want development to happen and they have already expressed an interest to move back in. I cannot speak for everybody. We are a large group and in any large group there will be diverse opinions and diverse motivations. I am sure that you will find some among us. But at the core we are a group of residents. I have seen people get exploited in developments and we want to control this process.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Absolutely. I understand that. But just to be clear, the core motivating factor for the initial organisation of you and your neighbours was to maximise financial benefit for you from development? There is nothing wrong with that, but it was not, in fact, because you care about—

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Point of order: I have to object to this paraphrasing of the witness' answer. The witness has just given a very detailed response. To categorise it as a self-serving motivation—

The CHAIR: I do not think that is what the Hon Rose Jackson was doing. If we could let her finish—

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I would just prefer that she did not recast the witness' response, which I think stands for itself.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I am interested to clarify his answer. I understood that you were saying that the initial motivating factor for you and your neighbours joining together was to leverage your position in relation to development in your area. As I said, there is nothing wrong with that. But that is what was motivating you, as opposed to just a general, altruistic view about public transport in your neighbourhood.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: I will provide a little bit more texture to my response. I think we care. When we got together the purpose was not to sell. There are some people in our group who definitely do not want to sell. The reason we got together—at least in my little group—was to say that we either go together or we stay together. If we stay together we stay. We are close to some really good schools and we are close to some really good parks. I do not have children so it does not concern me as much, but some of my neighbours are concerned by that. We knew that the development would impact our situation. The question then was simply: Do we control what we

do? I was talking to one of my neighbours over the back fence the other day after our rally and he said, "The thing that we want is not necessarily development; it is clarity."

As long as this uncertainty continues we cannot do anything. At the time this came onto the cards I had just gotten an engineer report for putting a second level on my house. My life has essentially been in suspense over this for about three years. Clarity one way or another is what we seek. Some of us obviously think that a little bit of money would not go astray. Some of us really like the area, especially those with little children, and they want to stay. We set the threshold quite high. If we are going to move it is going to take a lot to move us. If we are going to stay we want to stay. Initially when the metro first came out my first response was to say, "Yay, I am going to have better transport." That is what I thought until someone pointed out to me that maybe I am a little bit naïve and that there will be construction problems, people buying properties and people putting drug dealers in there to push us out to make sure that we sell low or whatever. I am mischaracterising that, but I know how developers operate. That is my motivation.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I think the witness is fairly genuine.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Ironically, it sounds like the community is trying to counter the power of the developers and not be divided and kicked off by developers.

The CHAIR: Would it be fair to say that the group is made up of property owners? Are there people who do not own property within your organisation and, if so, are their motivations different?

Mr BROWN: There are people who do not own property. I am aware of that.

The CHAIR: Do you think their motivations are different?

Mr BROWN: They want good transport. There are university students in our group.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Are they concerned about the closure of Redfern?

Mr BROWN: No. There will be other lines interjecting along the corridor.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Do those university students attend the University of Sydney?

Mr BROWN: I am not sure.

The Hon. WES FANG: There are a number of universities in Sydney. I am going to direct my questions to the Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce. Gentleman, thank you very much for coming along today. You obviously represent a large member base with diverse financial interests. Some would be small businesses and some would be large businesses. Across the board is it your experience that your membership is very supportive of this conversion of the line to a metro?

Mr MEHANNA: Thank you for the question. Let me declare for the record that we are a not-for-profit organisation and we are not lobbyists. I want to put that on the record. We are here to represent the voice of our members, their families and their local employees. We are very passionate about seeing this amazing project come in. It is a world-class service that will enhance our area and will attract local investment and employment to the area.

The Hon. WES FANG: I note the line of questioning of some members opposite just before I commenced my questioning. But there is no question about the bona fides of your organisation and its membership and motivation to see the metro go ahead. Is that correct?

Mr ARR AJ: It is important to recognise that the chamber—like most other business chambers—has the best interests of the business community at its heart. We have heard loud and clear that the business community in the Canterbury and Bankstown area believes that a metro would be of benefit to the locality. That is why we are here to push that argument forward. That is what is best for our area.

The Hon. WES FANG: To the gentleman representing Locals for Metro Southwest, we have heard from other groups earlier this morning that they might get 10 members to a meeting. Did I hear right that you had 300 members at your last meeting and that they were all in support of the metro?

Mr BROWN: It was not the last meeting; it was the one prior to that.

The Hon. WES FANG: Let me rephrase the question. Have you had 300 people attend a meeting recently who were all in support of the metro?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: We have.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I have a question for anyone who wishes to answer it. My understanding is that the metro is anticipated to increase property values in the area. If the metro was a disaster in the way that it is being categorised and public transport was going to be made worse, would you necessarily think that property values would increase?

Mr MEHANNA: Knowing that the metro is coming to the area has attracted a lot of investment in the area. I can say that the Flinders Centre Bankstown—a corporate centre—has had \$55 million invested by attracting a corporate presence. Then there is Bankstown RSL. Western Sydney University is about to introduce a vertical campus in Bankstown. They are facts. Simply knowing that the metro is coming has encouraged those investments. It is a chain reaction.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: That would imply, therefore, that the market thinks that the metro is going to be a positive thing for the area?

Mr MEHANNA: Absolutely.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: Could I address that, because living in Canterbury, which is not as vibrant as it was when I moved in 25 years ago; it is actually quite depressing, but there is some development on the south-west side—again, I am not party political; I blame all parties for this—even with what I would characterise as potentially corrupt development on the side of the rail line, we still have businesses moving in. I have cafes I could walk to and I have finally got places I can eat. There are enough people to sustain local businesses and that means sometimes I will actually stay in the area on a Saturday morning. If corrupt development can do that, imagine what a metro and cool development could do. It would actually be nice.

Mr MEHANNA: In the area we talk about a night economy, an after-five economy, and I think metro can play a vital role in driving the after-five economy. Taking about cars off the road, making people being safe and able to take public transport to their destinations—that is an additional value.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: The new destinations, as I understand it, will be available to locals.

Mr BROWN: Do you mean the line to Kogarah and the sort of thing that is proposed in the future?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: And hooking around—

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Into the north-west.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Into the north-west, yes.

Mr BROWN: That is very important, yes.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I thought your submission really touched strongly on the benefits of the metro in terms of social equity. You said that the businesses and residents in the middle-ring suburbs cannot aspire to a vibrant economy that would be frequented by mass transport that metro will promise. You are motivated by investment and jobs for your community. Is that right?

Mr ARR AJ: We are motivated by the need to get people closer to business. At the end of the day, the Canterbury-Bankstown region has tremendous prosperity. I think that prosperity has been underdeveloped for many, many years and as a chamber we are trying to realise that ability to increase business prosperity in the Canterbury-Bankstown region. That means bringing people closer to it, making it more efficient, making it more reliable, allowing them the opportunity to go to the local businesses without any obstacles and therefore enhancing economic development.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Let us be frank, and I do not seek to denigrate in any way, there is a higher unemployment rate, particularly for young people, in your catchment and lower average wages.

Mr ARR AJ: Yes.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Judging by your submission, you see this investment as a stimulus.

Mr MEHANNA: Local jobs, local employment. If you want to reduce congestion on the roads and people travelling outside their area, this is a great opportunity.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: In your submission you talk about the key advantages of this metro line. It is separate to the heavy rail system. You suggest that the metro system would be more reliable for Bankstown commuters, but you say that by providing a metro service that is independent of the Sydney trains network, service reliability and frequency will be increased. This offers the potential to support productivity and attract additional employment to your area. Do you want to expand upon that?

Mr MEHANNA: The frequency and a prompt service and the reliability will add value to people making decisions to travel to their destination. It is part of attracting visitors, attracting consumers, attracting members of families on the other side coming to visit the area. That will increase transactions. This can be translated into activities in the area.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Do you think it will attract more business investment?

Mr MEHANNA: It will attract more investment because we are a centre for diversity and a centre for hospitality. These two can be capitalised on to create opportunities to cater for that flavour and to build on that thing.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: This goes back to the social equity argument, that the middle-western ring has missed out on the uplift, which I think you are talking about, that other areas have benefited from thanks to investment in public infrastructure.

Mr MEHANNA: We are grateful to the Government for giving us this opportunity. We see from a logic perspective—constructively speaking, open-minded—that this is going to be added value. This is a plus that everyone will benefit from.

Mr ARR AJ: I think, more importantly, we have a university that is going to be built in the hub of Canterbury Bankstown, which is going to facilitate an additional 9,000 students.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: That is Western Sydney University.

Mr ARR AJ: Western Sydney University, which will have 9,000 extra people coming in and out of the city on a daily basis, which is a huge number. We need sufficient transport to enable the people to get in and out of that hub efficiently, timely and practically. The services at the moment do not facilitate that. We are trying to create a community that has better education. It is well known that Canterbury Bankstown has underemployment and lower education standards. We are trying to improve the quality of life. It is all part of the process. I do not know how you measure the dollar value of the metro that, by getting people in and out of that university hub, means people of the local community are able to go to a local university. From a social perspective, that value is huge.

Mr MEHANNA: In addition to what Mr Arraj said, this is one way to encourage white-collar jobs and support blue-collar jobs. We have the potential of an advanced manufacturing hub in the area; we have talked about a health precinct. Bankstown Airport is in an amazing area, a large centre that attracts a lot of workers and a lot of jobs. This area needs to be serviced—cars on the road, no. That is one way to service it with less pollution.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: How is it different from an approach that would enhance the existing service? You could enhance the existing rail service and still get the same benefits that you are talking about in terms of transport. How is the metro going to add to that any more than the existing service?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: If I may take that, I think, not being an engineer or a transport economist, it is easy to say that other enhancements are available. But in asking a question like that it would be incumbent upon you to articulate what the alternative would be. We as residents are happy for anything that improves life. We have talked about value and uplift, which sound numeric. Price is just a signal that reflects quality of life. That is what we are concerned about.

The CHAIR: For example, upgrading the digital signalling to enable trains to come every three minutes. Would that have the same impact?

Mr BROWN: I do not know because I do not work in the rail network.

The CHAIR: From the perspective of uplift around the area, would more frequent train services achieve the same thing as metro coming every four minutes?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: I think the answer would be potentially yes, but metro is not just about frequency. I am not sure if Mr Brown mentioned in his opening statement that there is a safety aspect to it as well. I know this sounds trivial, but the barriers that you have at the edge of the platform mean nobody is going to fall and the trains can go more quickly because they know nobody is going to be lying on the track. Those aspects tend to characterise metros—I am thinking about the Jubilee line in London; it can go quickly. I am not sure whether you would call it metro or heavy rail, but the effect is the same. Metro is just a name; it is the characteristics that matter.

The CHAIR: I will ask a couple more questions before passing to the Opposition. In relation to your submission, let us look at paragraph 15. There is a statement that it is undeniable that Metro Northwest line is

transporting up to 19 per cent more patrons on a month-to-month comparison. Are you aware that that comparison is talking about a line that has now been extended? Basically there is an entire region in Sydney's north-west, predominantly the Hills district, that now has rail services for the first time. You would expect this increase in the Metro Northwest line from opening up entire new areas, as opposed to the T3 conversion, which, other than towards the city—the Sydenham to Bankstown part—will not have any new stations. Is that an accurate or a relevant comparison for these purposes?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: Again, I did not write the submission but I think your characterisation is probably accurate. More people travelling on trains gets less people on roads. I think that is the fundamental point here.

The CHAIR: But the question is, will it result in more people getting out of their cars when we are not looking at opening up new areas to rail but talking about converting an existing rail service?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: You are delivering potential for more passenger kilometres. If there is more capacity—one of the things I consider when I go to the train is will I get on? Fortunately, I am an academic—I can travel any time—but I would not want to travel during peak hour, simply because of the amount of people on the train. I would consider it if there was more capacity. There is not.

The CHAIR: Again, it is not about the Metro; it is about the increase in capacity.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: As a resident, that is probably the most fundamental thing. How you characterise that —

The CHAIR: Yes, and how it can be achieved.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: "Metro" is just a name.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Can I just point out that there are new destinations? For example, I had a friend who worked at Macquarie University. The money that she spent in tolls each week and the time that she travelled—

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Is this a question or a statement?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: No, the issue is about whether it is simply increased capacity. I just want to—

The CHAIR: No, but in that case it was additional stations.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Yes, but this does give an additional—

The CHAIR: From Sydenham to Bankstown.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: I wanted to ask the members of the chamber about its membership. Do you have members, say, in Villawood? Do you represent members in Villawood? Do you have chamber members in the area of Villawood?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Are we still talking about the motivation?

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: No, I am not. If you would let me ask my question.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: You questioned the other group's motivation, so it is only fair.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: It is a simple question: Do you have members—

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Do you have members in Chester Hill?

Mr MEHANNA: Yes.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Do you have members in Sefton?

Mr MEHANNA: Yes.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Do you have members in Birrong?

Mr MEHANNA: Yes.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: And in Yagoona?

Mr MEHANNA: Yes, in Yagoona.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: How did you assess their opinions about whether the chamber should support this Metro proposal?

Mr MEHANNA: Through group discussion; through one-to-one meetings; through my daily visitation to my members; through the workshops that we participated in with Metro, part of the daily consultations. In fact, we conducted events—

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Those meetings are supportive, are they?

Mr MEHANNA: Yes. We in fact conducted—

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Just to clarify: Your evidence is that members of businesses that are associated with your chamber in those suburbs that my colleague listed are supportive of the current Sydenham to Bankstown Metro proposal?

Mr MEHANNA: They are in favour of seeing Metro coming to Bankstown.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: For example, businesses like Art of Gelato in Villawood that have publicly come out and said this is going to be devastating because they will be completely disconnected from the rest of the network. What do you say to a business like that, which is a fantastic business that is providing service all across Sydney, that has come out publicly to say how concerned it is?

Mr ARR AJ: If I can just answer that question, that organisation is not a member of our chamber. We cannot speak on behalf of that organisation because we have not heard its voice. If it wishes to become a part of our organisation we are more than happy to have it brought on board and then hear what it has to say and consider what it has to say. However, at the moment I cannot add value to the question in circumstances where it is not a member of our organisation.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: But do you understand the point that we are making in expressing some surprise that businesses west of Bankstown that will not benefit from the Metro, are not on the Metro line and in fact are going to have their train services into the city for themselves, their staff and their customers cut—your evidence to this committee is that those businesses in that part of Sydney who are members of yours are supportive of that outcome?

Mr ARR AJ: In numerous collaborative discussions that we have had with our members the overwhelming response—look, there is going to be disagreement to every single argument that is put forward or discussion that is put forward. We do not have 100 per cent consensus, absolutely not. However, we do have a large agreement, a large collaborative understanding that the Metro as a whole will be better for the region.

Mr MEHANNA: If I may, this is the event that we held. We invited the mayor, the honourable member Jason Clare, a couple of key stakeholders and we had the presence of 300 members and visitors across our Canterbury Bankstown region. The focus was a vision for Canterbury Bankstown. Metro was a topic of discussion and all key stakeholders were in favour.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Was part of that vision for Canterbury Bankstown the issue that is outlined in your submission, which is—

Mr MEHANNA: Metro.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Indeed, it includes the Metro, but it also includes the under-grounding at Bankstown, doesn't it? That is the position of your organisation. You describe a vision for Bankstown in which the Metro is in fact under-grounded at Bankstown.

Mr MEHANNA: We are in favour of seeing under-grounding at Bankstown station precinct, because this allows us to take Metro beyond Bankstown, via Bankstown airport to airport.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: But that is not the current proposal, is it?

Mr MEHANNA: We are hoping and we are asking the Government to futureproof the project.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: But even if that does not occur—and there has in fact been no suggestion that that would occur—you would still be supportive, even though that critical element of your vision for Bankstown would not be part of the proposal?

Mr MEHANNA: We repeat the same statement: As we have indicated on many occasions, we are in favour of Bankstown. We are asking the Government to build for the future. I bring to your attention the Coathanger, which is the Harbour Bridge. We recognise that the people who built for the Harbour Bridge built for

the future, 100 years ahead. I think we can only use their inspiration as a leading example for our case to convince the Government to consider building Bankstown underground.

The Hon. WES FANG: Can I just confirm, Chair, that the Canterbury Bankstown Chamber Of Commerce supports the part of the submission where it says that it is hoping that the Metro will be futureproofed for possible extension beyond Bankstown.

The Hon. WES FANG: That might possibly benefit those members who are west of the Bankstown line.

Mr MEHANNA: Correct.

Mr ARRAJ: Just to add to that, we as a chamber have in more recent times tried to have collaborative discussions with the other chambers—being Parramatta, the Greater West and even those south of us—to try and enhance business as a whole. We believe that the closer everybody is in the business community, the better the economy will be as a whole. We believe from a business perspective that the Metro is a good thing. We absolutely do also believe that going underground is a better option than above-ground, for numerous reasons. Sometimes things take time and you have got to go in stages and steps. At the moment we have an opportunity to create a Metro, in the first instance, which we and our general members believe will enhance the Canterbury Bankstown region.

Mr MEHANNA: And serve the purpose of being smart cities.

The CHAIR: Following on from my colleague's questions, do you have members in Belmore?

Mr MEHANNA: Yes, we do.

The CHAIR: How do you go about getting members? Is there a membership drive? Are you going out and contacting new businesses?

Mr MEHANNA: Word-of-mouth, referral, social media and cold calling. Our events themselves attract visitors because we promote collaboration. Our ideology is that geographical boundaries are irrelevant, status is irrelevant, friendship is irrelevant. This is our co-focus and that is why we attract—

The CHAIR: I have a letter here that was sent to me from the Belmore Shopkeepers Association. Are you familiar with that association?

Mr MEHANNA: No.

The CHAIR: It is signed by I think 14 or 16 different shopkeepers.

The Hon. WES FANG: Can you give us all a copy? Is that okay?

The CHAIR: I could table that, if that would be helpful.

The Hon. WES FANG: I would just like to know what you are referring to.

The CHAIR: Yes, sure. Can I just ask the question first and then we can table it? It says that it is not aware of your existence. It says, "We are not aware of the Canterbury Bankstown Chamber Of Commerce and no person from this group has ever liaised with us or lobbied on our behalf. They do not represent our views". It then goes on to oppose the Metro. What sort of percentage of businesses along this rail corridor or within your region do you think that you would be representing?

Mr ARRAJ: If I can say in the first instance that we are not a lobbying organisation. It is important to identify clearly that we are a chamber and we represent businesses with a view to improving business in the region. We have no agenda per se, other than to ensure to the best of our abilities to get the local businesses as a whole to improve, better themselves and at the end of the day improve their bottom line.

The CHAIR: If businesses come to you, you will encourage the collaboration but it is not part of your role to go and actively elicit.

Mr ARRAJ: We are not lobbyists by any stretch of the imagination.

The CHAIR: Understood, yes.

The Hon. WES FANG: Madam Chair, can I seek some clarification? I have just done a search for the Bellmore Shopkeepers Association. The only reference I can find online is the Bellmore Shopkeepers Association on Facebook, but their Facebook page has been deleted. Do you know where you got this correspondence from?

The CHAIR: It was delivered to me today.

The Hon. WES FANG: By?

The CHAIR: By one of the other witnesses. If you have a look at the—

The Hon. WES FANG: No, no. I am just wondering.

The CHAIR: It is signed.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I am sorry, which witness?

The Hon. WES FANG: Which witness provided this to you?

The CHAIR: It was actually provided—

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: What is your point?

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: What are you actually asking for? Is this your point of order?

The Hon. WES FANG: No, no. The Chair has introduced a document and is using it to question the witnesses. This was not provided to us prior to this hearing. I have just done a search online. The only reference I can find to the Bellmore Shopkeepers Association online is to a Facebook page. When I go to that Facebook page, I find it has been deleted.

The CHAIR: Okay. Let me get some further clarification. I understood that that had been sent to the Committee and that was just a copy of it, but let me clarify that.

The Hon. WES FANG: May I ask who provided it to you?

The CHAIR: I will come back to you on but because I think it is important to clarify whether it is a copy or the original. I believe it is a copy.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: We really want to understand the source of the question.

The CHAIR: Yes. That is fair enough.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: In fairness to the witnesses who are being asked the question—

The CHAIR: Fair enough. I am happy to table the document.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: But clarify where the document came from.

The CHAIR: I will clarify and find that out.

The Hon. WES FANG: Because it is dated 4 November, which would be Monday, yet the only reference that I could find online—and that is just using Google as a search engine—that page is deleted.

The CHAIR: I do not know. I will come back to you. I just ask one more question, which is my final question directed to the chamber. Some other witnesses have been saying that it would be great to restore the Inner West line. I address this question to both groups. What is your position on whether restoring the Inner West line would also be helpful for business and residents?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: Again, I am not an engineer or a transport economist but my understanding is that the Sydney train system is somewhat antiquated. They were going to separate all the lines out at one stage and I am not sure if that has ever happened. My understanding of one of the benefits of—whether you call it a Metro or something else—is that it will be separate from the rest of the system, hence there will not be all those follow-through problems—I am sorry, those bottlenecks that happen if there is a problem in one area. So, again, whatever you call it, so long as those characteristics are achieved, speaking for the residents I think we would be happy because it would ensure adequate frequent transportation, which is ultimately what enhances our quality of life.

Mr ARRAJ: We as a chamber would love the opportunity to meet with the business community in the Inner West. As the Canterbury Bankstown chamber, we understand our area and the needs of our business community. We would love to collaborate and talk to the businesses of the Inner West to understand what their needs are and see how we can identify whether or not the changes in the transport system in the Inner West will benefit them in any way. We cannot at the moment make any comment because we just do not understand what those needs are and how they can benefit.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I would like to direct some questions to Mr Brown and Dr CZERNKOWSKI. We have heard evidence from other witnesses here today, and it is referenced multiple times in the submissions, that one of the concerns that people have in relation to this project is that associated with the transport upgrade there will be more development. There will be land use upgrade. As residents in the local community, are you concerned about more development in your suburbs, the schools that your children go to and the local hospitals that you use?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: I would like to reiterate the short answer is we are concerned. We hope it happens. To put nuance on that, come and visit Canterbury. As I said earlier, the corrupt developments improved the area. What could good development do? I think we are looking forward to it. Whether we stay or whether we sell out, the area has never been a marginal seat. Sorry, I know I should not be negative. Nobody has ever cared about us. In the area in the 25 years I have been there, shops have shut and banks have shut. Until the last few years the place has been slowly dying. Again, I do not want to bag the Canterbury council but they had a plan probably about 15 years ago. They were going to plant palm trees down the middle of Canterbury Road and turn that into some sort of boulevard with alfresco dining—a major arterial route. Please.

I think there is the potential for development—again, as long as the development makes sense. I have seen a lot of rubbish go up in Sydney and I am sure you have too and I am sure that that is what you are thinking about. I think if development were good, those of us who intend to move back, who love the area—I have only been there 25 years; I did not grow up there; for me, I am flexible—I think we are looking forward to it. Come and visit Canterbury. Honestly, it cannot get any worse, really.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Mr Brown, do your children go to our local schools?

Mr BROWN: They go to school in Burwood.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I understand what you are saying in terms of some of the potential benefits of development but there is also the potential impact on local schools, for example, who are already at or over capacity and are being serviced by, for example, a high number of demountables. I suppose I would be interested if you have spoken to any people who are dealing with that issue and whether they have concerns about more people moving into the areas.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: Some of the members in my small group—in fact, the guy over the back fence—sends his child to the Canterbury primary, I think it is. In New South Wales you call that the Canterbury Public School. I have never really worked that out. The high school is adjacent to that. He speaks highly of the school. My understanding from him is there is no overcrowding, but I mean to be brutally honest it is clear that schools in general need investment. To say that we can do one thing separately from another, that probably does not make a lot of sense. But on the other hand in a sense as residents we are desperate. If you are going to use another excuse not to do this, eventually nothing will happen.

Some of the arguments I heard against the Metro were essentially circular. One of the arguments was: We do not need the Metro because there are not enough people to justify it. In almost the same breath people would say, "We don't want any development because there is no infrastructure to justify it." Well, the Metro is a form of infrastructure. It is a step forward. Again, seriously—I am not just saying this rhetorically—come and visit Canterbury, please.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I have, thank you. You have said that a number of times. I have visited Canterbury because I live quite close to there.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Which school is overcrowded?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: Okay.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I suppose I am genuinely familiar with the congestion that is already on the roads, the schools that are already overcrowded and the pressure that is already on the hospital networks.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Which schools?

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: A number of the submissions have referenced the fact that that is already quite a significant issue and that further development that is associated with this Metro will put yet more pressure on an area that I am quite familiar with. But it is not about that. The evidence from the submissions has made clear that it is of real concern to many people in the community. I suppose I am interested as to why you are not concerned about that.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: We are concerned. Bear in mind that people who tend to write submissions, we all work and so for us this was a bit of an effort. I was not involved in this particular one. People who write submissions have time to write submissions. It does not mean it reflects everybody's opinion. The Metro is not going to solve everything. Anybody who says one piece of infrastructure is a silver bullet for all the ills of society is misguided. But you mentioned congestion on the roads. If it solves that, I will be happy. It is one step forward.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I think if there was evidence from the Inner West Council earlier today that because of the closure of the heavy rail line to allow for the building of the Metro, that will force more people into their vehicles and that getting them out of their cars and onto the new Metro is a genuine challenge to which, for example, the Inner West Council does not have an answer.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: True. But in order to buy my house I had to go through the temporary and not very convenient task of having a mortgage. No pain, no gain. Everything involves some sacrifice but the outcome—is it worth it? I think it is. Does it solve everything? No, it does not. To be honest, it makes you a little bit perplexed because I actually thought the Labor guys would be for it.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: They do not like to see gentrification. Don't worry.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: Sorry. No, no. Deng Xiaoping said, "Don't care if it is a black cat or a white cat. If it catches mice, it's fine." But I would have thought public transport, but then the world—sorry: I digress. I did answer. I said it is not going to solve everything but, if it solves congestion, that is one step forward.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: What if it does not solve congestion? What if the construction period and, for example, the fact that the line stops at Bankstown and forces people west of Bankstown onto roads to drive into the city and makes congestion worse?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: Your alternative is to build more roads. Public transport is the future. Building more roads is the past.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: No, the alternative would be to build public transport to areas that are not already serviced by public transport.

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: That would be great. If we had a grid, like the *Sydney Morning Herald* review from a few years ago that actually got away from the politics and looked at what would actually serve people, would be great.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Are you familiar with whether the Government considered any alternative lines or proposals to the closure of the Bankstown line for the development of Metro Southwest?

Dr CZERNKOWSKI: I am aware that we as residents were polled on the duration of the closures, and the timing of them. I think there were two choices that we were given. One was an extended period of closure and another was multiple shorter closures. I think most of us went for multiple shorter closures. That was the choice we were given. I am not aware of any other choices that may have been behind any of this.

The CHAIR: The Hon. Wes Fang, I understand that the Shopkeepers Association sent the letter to the inquiry and it was given to my office by Barbara Khoury who is one of the witnesses later this afternoon. I believe that that organisation is not on Facebook. However, the Facebook page of Sophie Cotsis shows a photo of her meeting with the Belmore Shopkeepers Association. If that makes the Hon. Wes Fang happy he will see that they do exist.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: In regards to the Chamber of Commerce, as members may recall I worked for two years for Liverpool Council and the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and the Bankstown Chamber of Commerce have very close relationships. It is a legitimate and hardworking Chamber of Commerce. I do not want anyone to get the impression that the committee is questioning its legitimacy. Like any Chamber of Commerce you welcome membership applications and you are probably struggling to find members. Is that right?

Mr MEHANNA: Our good work has been incredible enough to attract members to come and join the chamber because they can see a vibrant, dynamic platform. It attracts people from all walks of life, allows them to connect with other people, to develop their leadership skills, learn about latest trends and build relationships.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Your submission talks about the possible extension to Liverpool via Bankstown airport which is outside our terms of reference although we are allowed to talk about related matters. I think it is related. Are you a strong supporter of future extension through Liverpool?

Mr MEHANNA: Absolutely.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Do you see potential employment generator for quality jobs, high-tech jobs at Bankstown airport if it is better connected to the Sydney transport system?

Mr MEHANNA: Absolutely. I think the current master plan for Bankstown airport already predicts about 10,000 jobs to be created and hence where we see the need for the Government to really speed up the process of taking the Bankstown line beyond to Liverpool. Hence where we see the argument for undergrounding the station logically and from an engineering perspective, that is why we received the information, that will make the journey easier to go under the river to Liverpool.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I think for at least a decade you have had a vision to underground Bankstown station. I think every suburban area or town has got the railway line right through the middle and wishes it was not the case. In regards to my colleagues' comments about the hospital are you aware the announcement in the last State election of the Liberal-Nationals Government of \$1.3 billion new hospital for Bankstown?

Mr MEHANNA: We are receiving a brand new hospital.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Which will help service the increasing population.

Mr MEHANNA: Absolutely, it will enhance.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: You welcome that?

Mr MEHANNA: Absolutely.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: During the construction period it probably will affect businesses. Do you have a process in place or one you would seek for discussion between business and government about the inconvenience that may be caused to them during the construction phase?

Mr MEHANNA: The Government already planned for a contingency plan which is buses. Recently I attended an event for Riverside Chamber of Commerce and spoke to Mr Tony Abboud, the President, to gauge the most recent experience about Metro in that region and if there was any impact of disruption and those sorts of things. If I may just quickly read his response to me in an email. It states:

As you know the Metro passed through our district particularly between Epping and Macquarie Park and under Chatswood. In that sector we did not experience any major disruption to traffic, business or the community at large during the construction stage. In fact, the biggest impact to our community was during the shutdown of the Epping to Chatswood rail line for eight months so they could convert the line to suit the Metro. There was a lot of fear that they would cause major disruption. The reality was that there very little disruption during that period. This was because the State Government, Transport for NSW and the local council and the business chamber worked together to design and implement a temporary solution involving buses, traffic management and flexible employment arrangement with local business. It was so successful that when the Metro opened people were disappointed that the temporary solution was suspended.

I am happy to table this letter in evidence.

Mr ARR AJ: I think more importantly when it comes to the construction phase that the consultative nature of the arrangement between council, government and businesses is ongoing. If we have that continued collaboration, those continued meetings to understand what is going on, everybody is in sync and on the same page then I think that transitional process would be a lot easier. It is when you do not talk and communicate that people get nervous and businesses start to worry. We are not political here in any way, shape or form. We are here to represent the interests of the businesses and we want the best for them.

The CHAIR: The Committee has resolved that any answers to questions taken on notice will be returned within 21 days. If there are any for you the secretariat will contact you.

(The Witnesses withdrew.)

EMMA JONES, Executive Officer, Campus Infrastructure and Services, University of Sydney, affirmed and examined

GREGORY FRANCIS ROBINSON, Director, Campus Infrastructure and Services, University of Sydney, sworn and examined

CHRISTIAN WATTS, Divisional Manager, Property and Development Team, University of Sydney, affirmed and examined:

break

The CHAIR: I invite you to make a short opening statement.

Mr ROBINSON: On behalf of the university we would like to thank the Committee for allowing us the opportunity to provide evidence on what we feel is a very important inquiry for the future of Sydney. The university's main campus sits within the Camperdown Ultimo collaboration area recognised by the Greater Sydney Commission as one of Sydney's economic engines and the most mature of its health and education precincts. Despite this the Greater Sydney Commission also recognises that the area's future growth is likely to be curtailed by a lack of public transport with the university of Sydney and the RPA hospital surrounded by congested roads, limited cycle paths and one rail station, being Redfern, which is aged and over capacity during peak hours.

We see that the proposed Sydney Metro, city and south-west line will remove more direct train services to Redfern for commuters who live west of Sydenham on the T3 Bankstown line. The alignment will lead to an increase in travel times of between 15- and 26 per cent for our estimated 2,000 staff and students who use this line. This proposal also follows on the back of a number of recent timetable changes which have further reduced services to Redfern and is yet another blow to the accessibility and connectivity of the Camperdown area which, despite an increase this population and economic growth, is not slated for any new major public transport infrastructure. The announced Redfern station refurbishment, which we welcome, is for disability and compliance upgrades but will not materially improve future capacities of the station.

We are asking the New South Wales Government to not only consider the projected growth of the University of Sydney but also the projected growth of the Royal Prince Alfred, the Australian Technology Park, which is about to open offices with the Commonwealth Bank for over 10,000 new employees, the redevelopment of north Eveleigh and the growth of the CBD corridor with the newly announced central precinct. These are all initiatives which the university supports in terms of the growth, but initiatives that will require an integrated transport solution to make them work if we are going to have that sort of level of growth. We have strong support from the Camperdown-Ultimo alliance, which includes the Inner West Council, City of Sydney, the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, ourselves, University of Technology Sydney and Notre Dame.

That alliance has been formed to work on initiatives with the Government around integrated transport to try and take the recommendations from the Greater Sydney Commission. It is our argument that if we are going to deal with this growth we have to have another heavy rail solution within this precinct. Our suggested response has been on a number of occasions that the Government consider a metro station within Camperdown, whether that is an extension to the Sydney Metro West route or it is an alternate switchback, it does not matter. What does matter is that there is a mass transit solution. We are seeing this inquiry as an opportunity for us to both give feedback about the Sydenham to Bankstown line and at the same time look at the reality of the transport deficit in the collaboration area.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I would like to hear a little bit more about the research you have done as a university into how many students, staff, other people who use the precinct more generally, would be effected by the proposed change and specifically the removal of Redfern?

Mr ROBINSON: Some of that has been included in our report. There are other reports that we reference that have been done by consulting firms that we have employed to do this. Over the last three to four years we have had numerous reports produced for the university around the issues of where our students are, what is the accessibility for them. In this particular case we flagged in our submission that there are just over 2,000 staff and students who are affected by the Bankstown line within one kilometre of the stations along that route. There is a further 1,000 if you take that radius out to two kilometres.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: It has been suggested earlier, I do not know if you have been here for the evidence, that it was not of concern because there are alternative transport options for the students than Redfern. I am interested in your comment about the viability of those alternative options. They would be changing at Sydenham or coming back from central is what people had in mind. I would like a comment on how you feel about those as meaningful alternatives for your staff and students?

Mr ROBINSON: I guess it was raised earlier in the evidence I overheard about the fact there are two phases. One is a construction phase and then there is a phase after that. The construction phase worries us more so than the end solution because it is in that period of time where our students would need to be in already congested road systems to be able to get from these stations to the campus. Our evidence is that our students in the final solution are going to be inconvenienced rather than not having an alternate route. That inconvenience obviously starts to mount up in terms of the percentage of time that it requires them to do their journey and it starts to reflect on their productivity as a student in terms of the time they have available for study that they have allocated. Most of our students need to have a job of some sort. They are balancing between work life, student life and the movement to and from those activities becomes problematic for them.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: How important is it to the university overall in terms of its broad strategic goal and vision for its role in the city and the State that it be transport accessible? Is it not a big deal, a minor footnote to your vision, or central to the vision you see for the university and its growth and the role it plays?

Mr ROBINSON: If I could speak on behalf of the alliance, of which I am a member. The alliance has just recently confirmed that our number one issue for the success of the collaboration area in Camperdown-Ultimo is actually an integrated transport strategy. One of the things that is happening within the university sector is we are now being evaluated on student experience. It is becoming part of the formula in which we receive revenue from the Federal Government for our student placements. Things like transport become significant issues for our students in terms of the way they feel that the university is providing that experience for them. Their experience, as you would expect, starts from home and ends at home and everything that goes in between it. It is a critically important issue for us getting transport sorted.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Have you done any research on how students, perhaps staff as well, from different areas of Sydney, access the university? I am asking whether you have any evidence or research that contrasts how people, the 2,000 to 3,000 that you mentioned, access the university verses say people coming from the eastern suburbs or North Shore? Have you done research on that?

Mr ROBINSON: We have very detailed research on that. Obviously we keep data on our students in terms of their place of origin, as well as our staff. We have heat maps in terms of where our staff and students live. The majority of our students live along the train lines because of the need for transport. When you look at those heat maps and you follow out any of the heavy rail lines within Sydney you will find clusters of our students there depending on which particular station. It obviously varies. Yes, if you look at modes of transport, which is an important way of understanding the university, we continue to grow. It is the desire of everybody that the collaboration area does actually grow and meets the teaching and research demands that the city has, certainly on the University of Sydney.

As we do that we are capped with the number of car spaces we have on the university campus. I think we have 2,600 car spaces. They have not changed in the time I have been at the university. In fact, we have reduced car space numbers. As our student numbers grow the choices of what transport solutions they have go to bus, effectively rail, and more importantly what we are working with the City of Sydney and Inner West Council on is trying to improve cycleways and pedestrian ways so that is encouraged as well. As much as possible we are trying to find alternatives. We are also thinking through and working with Transport for NSW on the future forms of transport as we start to look at electric scooters, which have arrived in most cities in the world.

We have put our hand up to work with transport to trial to see if electric scooters breach what we call the last mile. Our issue, when you look at where we are placed away from central and Redfern, is that we are trying to close a gap which we call "the last mile". It is one thing to make those heavy rail and metro systems work and work effectively, it is another thing to be able to close that gap in terms of getting the student from the station to the campus. Unless we put a station inside the campus—we were hopeful we would before it was allocated to Waterloo—there isn't really any other choice but to try to look at this integration and to get these last-mile gaps closed as best we can.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Where would a prospective station be located?

Mr ROBINSON: We put some technical solutions on several occasions. There are two sites which are very plausible within the university where we have offered to Transport, through submissions, the land and the corridors to be made available for that. One is under City Road, adjacent to where our Wentworth buildings are. We are actually committed to demolishing buildings to allow for the station box to be built on Maze Crescent. We have another location, which is down where our veterinary hospital is on Parramatta Road, where again we have made commitments that we will clear and make available the land for a station box if the Government was to move the Metro line so that it could go to Camperdown.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: That would involve a significant adjustment, though, to the West Metro proposal.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: And the Bays Precinct, I think.

Mr ROBINSON: One of the opportunities that is available at the moment is that as the Bays Precinct comes into the city, where you terminate at the city or terminate at Camperdown. One of the choice sets would be what I call switch back to the university from the CBD and effectively use that as the terminus point. It makes more sense to be terminating at a destination like the university rather than in the CBD. You actually want to move the Metros out of those places. That is one of the things that we have put forward to the Government to consider—at a time in the future does it make sense to connect the Metro West so that it comes to the campus?

Our studies and the information we have provided shows that there is a really strong economic benefit if you link to Westmead, which is where the university's aspirations for building a significant second campus are—we are already embedded into the hospital. If you link the two innovation precincts of Camperdown-Darlington with Westmead you get a significant multiplier effect. We have been asking the Government to consider those benefits as being able to justify effectively that link back from the CBD to the campus.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I commend you for campaigning for a station at the university. There are clear economic benefits to our State and to our nation to do that. But there are competing interests, as you know from the last decision. I want to drill down to the specifics of the Bankstown line and your submission. I am sorry I missed your opening statement. I was in my office but I did hear some of it. What were the number of students and staff that you identified that would be impacted by not being able to get off at Redfern from that Bankstown line? Did you identify that?

Mr ROBINSON: I did. It was 2,077 in our submission. I said around 2,000 earlier.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Per day?

Mr ROBINSON: Per day.

The CHAIR: Students.

Mr ROBINSON: Yes.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I am very familiar with the area. I was a councillor there for 12 years and I have a place down there. The Waterloo station is literally—

The Hon. WES FANG: Eight minutes walk.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I was about to say it is 300 or 400 metres, maybe less, from the new proposed western end of Redfern station—and you announced a connection across to the university walk there.

Mr ROBINSON: We have certainly examined that. Our consultants have given us information about what the travel distances would be from the Waterloo station. It is still is a significant deficit in terms of time. You are better off to walk from lots of areas on the campus to Central than you are to try to get to Waterloo.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: There are huge numbers walking from Central—I see it every day—down to the university, so that is an active transport walking route.

Mr ROBINSON: Not as active as the Redfern one. The majority of our students arrive from Redfern. They do not use Central because the time difference between the two is somewhere between 10 and 12 minutes extra if you were to walk from Central. That is part of what the alliance is looking at the moment. With the rebuild of Central precinct, when you look at people's walking distances there are two pieces to it. One is physically how much distance you are walking. The other one is the environment you are walking in. If you have a good pace-making solution in people's minds you can shorten the time that the journey is taking.

At the moment it is an arduous journey, both from Redfern and from Central. It is acknowledged by Transport and everybody else that if you could fix that and do some things to accelerate the way that people could move in an environment which is conducive then you would make it more attractive. But as it is at the moment, people are voting with their feet. They are rejecting the Central to Camperdown option over Redfern. That is increasing the amount of foot traffic at Redfern. At the moment we have an issue on Lawson Street, which is the heaviest desire line. Our data counts show that there are 2,000 students every 15 minutes trying to make the journey along what is a footpath no wider than about a metre and a half on Lawson Street to get to the campus.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: That will be addressed with the announced western connection.

Mr ROBINSON: That will improve things because that will change people through to Wilson Street—one of the reasons we are very supportive of that upgrade.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Did you say 2,000 per minute.

Mr ROBINSON: Two thousand per 15 minutes.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I just want to finish with one thing, if I can. When I was on the city council we looked at the issues of light rail. There was a strong campaign to extend the light rail down Broadway to University of Sydney as a solution to the transport issues there, too. Are you still interested in pursuing that?

Mr ROBINSON: We are interested in any solution, to be honest. We are transport agnostic. What we are trying to do is to get an integrated solution that allows for our students to get to and from the campus in the most timely fashion that we can get them there.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Can I just ask one quick question.

The CHAIR: Sorry, Ms Cusack.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Going back to what you were asking earlier in terms of the inconvenience, you talked about 15 per cent extra travel times for the students. Can you tell me how much time that is in actual times?

Mr ROBINSON: I can take that on notice and provide the Aurecon report. I am happy for you to have a look at how the calculations were done.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Is it like half an hour?

Mr WATTS: I think it is about 15 minutes.

The CHAIR: I have a few questions in relation to alternatives. As I read your submission it is talking about the proposal as it is, converting the entire Bankstown to Sydenham heavy rail to Metro. How would your submission change if the Metro stopped at Sydenham—so if the Sydenham to Bankstown remained heavy rail. Have you done any analysis on how that would impact on travel times? Was that thought about at all?

Mr ROBINSON: Yes. That is what has been factored in. You have to do a change in Sydenham.

The CHAIR: Right.

Mr ROBINSON: You get off the Metro onto the heavy rail to Redfern and off the heavy rail, or you get off at Waterloo and walk up from Waterloo.

The CHAIR: So if the Metro stopped at Sydenham then we would not see this increase in travel times.

Mr ROBINSON: You would. The travel times reflect that change. At the moment if a student gets onto a train at Bankstown and goes directly to Redfern that is what we would call the current state.

The CHAIR: Because they would still be changing at Sydenham.

Mr ROBINSON: They are either changing at Sydenham, changing at Central or getting off at Waterloo and walking. They are the three steps.

The CHAIR: From the perspective of people who are going to Redfern then it makes very little difference whether the Metro stops at Sydenham or at Bankstown because you are having to make that extra change regardless.

Mr ROBINSON: Where it gets more important for our students is that it does affect them at Bankstown because if they live further down the heavy rail line from Bankstown and if they are coming to Bankstown they have to change at Bankstown to get on the Metro then change off the Metro at Sydenham or Central.

The CHAIR: Understood. If the Inner West line was restored, which, as I understand it—I apologise for my ignorance of the Inner West line—went to Redfern as well, when it used to come from Liverpool, would that improve? On the assumption that the conversion occurs as planned, but then we also have some of that Inner West line restored so that you can get direct to Redfern trains from Liverpool and the nine stations west of Bankstown, do you have any idea as to how many people that would help?

Mr ROBINSON: We would need to specifically look at the modelling for that .

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: I was going to ask that question. How many students travel from those nine stations that are affected west of Bankstown. Are you able to provide some data on notice?

Mr WATTS: It was 30 per cent of the 2,000.

Mr ROBINSON: It was in our submission. About 30 per cent of the 2,000 come from out that way.

The CHAIR: Did you get any data in that survey about what people are actually doing when they are on these trains? I am always quite interested because I have always commuted well over an hour to everything I have ever been to, whether it is the university or a job, and I use that time productively. Do you have any data on whether students are doing study on their mode of transport or anything like that?

Mr ROBINSON: Chair, it will all be anecdotal.

Mr WATTS: A lot of the trains are at standing capacity at the moment.

The CHAIR: So they are standing anyway.

Mr WATTS: I do not think they can sit down and work on their laptops and do work.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Everyone is on their phones these days, Madam Chair, and have their headphones in.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Do you want to know what students are doing on the train? They are not studying.

The CHAIR: Clearly they are not diligent students, like I was.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I was.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I used to read a paperback, but that was a while ago now.

The CHAIR: My other question is in relation to students with a disability and accessibility needs. Do you see any benefits or detriments of the conversion proposal when it comes to those students?

Mr ROBINSON: There are two things. One, we would acknowledge the upgrade of Redfern station, which is designed around disability access, which we have been calling for a long time. We absolutely welcome that because that will improve life generally for our students with disabilities. In terms of having a student with a disability—and I am not sure if in that 2,000 students we have, students with a disability, particularly a mobility issue, in which they would require to be able to move through lifts and things. Again, it is about that changing. It is obviously an inconvenience. If they have got to get on at one station and end up at their destination where they have got accessibility sorted by lifts, that is fine and that, I guess, would be the minimum status quo that we would see starting. But then if you are asking your student with a disability to get on, change—so if they are coming into Bankstown, then having to change at Bankstown, then having to change at Sydenham, is a significant inconvenience to them.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I wanted to ask about students living in the north-western area, which is now serviced by the Metro Northwest. Do you have any statistics on that?

Mr ROBINSON: Not yet, because the transport that is there is what I would call settling down, in that people are starting to change their transport patterns as a result of the metro arriving. We did have some feedback about the bus services, which the Government has moved to address the concerns that were happening about that. We are probably due to now do a piece of work to have a look at what that has meant in terms of modal splits on the north-west. Again, we would only have anecdotal information at the moment.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: But instinctively, would you say that it has improved public transport access for students living in those areas?

Mr ROBINSON: You would naturally think so, because we have a lot of students who live in that corridor.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I know.

Mr ROBINSON: A significant draw for us from that area, and we have always had issues to do with connectivity. It is only going to be better.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: My son lived on campus and unfortunately got himself a job at the Macquarie Centre bowling club, and it was an hour and a half, I think, each way. I guess the suggestion is that somehow the University of Sydney is being cut off from public transport. But in actual fact, the issue more is about the connectivity.

Mr ROBINSON: Our students will migrate to public transport. That is what students do, because it is the most cost-effective form of transport for them. They have not got an ability, really, to park cars on campus, so the choice set of having a vehicle and using a vehicle just is not there for them. So if they are not living at home and they are independent—and this is all of our international students, as well as domestic students living out of home—they gravitate to where the public transport is.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: And this affects their accommodation, obviously, quite significantly.

Mr ROBINSON: Yes.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Congratulations on the campaign to get the transport solutions. I just wondered if you might mention that there is actually a number of universities and facilities; I gather that you are working collaboratively with them.

Mr ROBINSON: We are.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Could you describe that precinct that you are seeking a solution for?

Mr ROBINSON: The collaboration area?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Yes, and who are the members of it.

Mr ROBINSON: The alliance currently has got the Inner West Council, the City of Sydney, University of Sydney, University of Technology Sydney, Notre Dame and TAFE. The Greater Sydney Commission and Transport for NSW are invitees, effectively, to the conversations because they are the main focus areas. As I said before, the main focus area for that alliance is the integrated transport solution. What there is a recognition of is that there are three nodes under the Greater Sydney Commission's place-making strategy for this collaboration area. It is this third node that is the one that is problematic, which is where the university and the Royal Prince Alfred [RPA]—sorry, the other party that is involved; I knew I missed one. RPA are also in the alliance.

It is the third node, which is the bio hub that we are trying to create along Parramatta Road, where there is real problems in terms of the transport linkage between the three nodes. To get the collaboration area firing at its economic best, to have good connectivity between those three nodes—the Sydney tech hub node, which is on Central; the emerging Redfern deep tech node; and the bio hub node on Parramatta Road—you need to connect all three. It is that third node where there just is significant issues with getting people from the hospital and from the university to transport.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Thank you for mentioning the three nodes. I just want to give you the opportunity to emphasise the transformation of the whole area in terms of education and technology investment that is happening.

Mr ROBINSON: Yes, no question. The plan that everybody has signed up to, I think, is an amazing plan for the reconfiguration of the city. What we are taking is what is, by all measures, the most innovative and research tech ready precinct in Australia, and we are actually trying to take it to a new dimension. We will not get to the full dream if we do not solve some of the issues along the way, but the journey is well underway. We would acknowledge that as a partner in delivering on that ambition, that we are making good inroads.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I think it is really exciting. I do not think the metro is going to be the solution here, but this has been a good opportunity to air that again. What is the solution, other than the metro?

Mr ROBINSON: We do not know. It is a rapid transport solution to link that third node with the other two nodes. What that looks like—as I said earlier, the university is transport-agnostic. There has been many options; there was a suggestion before that, at one point in time, light rail was going to run down Parramatta Road. That has been taken off the table. That would have been an acceptable solution.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: It would be a brave government at the moment.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: To connect to Central?

Mr ROBINSON: To Broadway/Central.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: You mentioned earlier that students will migrate to public transport; they will just work in around the circumstances that are presented to them. I suppose the other choice point might be to not attend university altogether. In relation to this inquiry and the accessibility of the University of Sydney to students on the Sydenham to Bankstown train line and, in particular, those west of Bankstown who will not even

be directly on the metro line, I wondered if you had any reflection on whether, because of the increased time it will take to access the university and the inconvenience of that, there may be students who opt out of attending university altogether.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Are you serious?

Mr ROBINSON: I think it would be more that they would opt out of the University of Sydney. There are choices.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: What impact does that have on the University of Sydney if students from a whole part of Sydney—for example, south-west Sydney—no longer choose the university and it is only students from, for example, the eastern suburbs or the North Shore that are attending university?

Mr ROBINSON: From a diversity perspective, that would not be a good thing for the university. We pride ourselves on being the university for Sydney. We pride ourselves on the fact that anyone who is in the metropolitan area of Sydney can have access to our university. We enjoy the diversity that we get from being so accessible. So that would be problematic.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: It is part of the university's diversity goals and strategic goals to include, for example, students from low socio-economic backgrounds and students who are first-time university attendees in their family, is it not?

Mr ROBINSON: Yes.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: And you would have concerns if increasing numbers of students from those particular groups were no longer attending the University of Sydney and the way that that would impact the makeup and the feel of the university?

Mr ROBINSON: The concern would be the equity issue. It is an equity issue. What that comes down to is that as a university we wish to remain as equitable as we possibly can. If there are constraints in terms of the ways in which the students can access the university, that would probably bias where we would put scholarship money and where we would try to close that gap. Because we would try to close that gap. But it would be problematic.

The CHAIR: Conversely, you would assume that if an area had less connectivity to the university that perhaps that area would not be as desirable? If you are trying to improve the living quality within an area, the connection to the local universities or closest university being worse is not going to be very good for the area's economic uplift. That is more of a comment than a question. I apologise.

Mr ROBINSON: You are right. The work we have done recently around the student experience, particularly to do with accommodation, says that our students are right on a very thin line in terms of price point for accommodation. The number one thing in all of their responses to us was about price point when it comes to where they can live or where they can get accommodation. That is the driver. The second thing is transport and connectivity.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Has any student said to you, "I am going to drop out of university because my travel time has increased by 15 minutes?"

Mr ROBINSON: Not that I am aware of.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Do you think it is likely that they will drop out of university for that reason?

Mr ROBINSON: I think they will make choices. It goes back to that choice set. And they do it now. We have done a lot of research into the university's decision to build a second campus at Westmead. Part of that conversation was: Would Westmead be more attractive than Camperdown in terms of people's decision? In other words, if you are currently travelling 40 to 50 minutes to get to Camperdown, if we build a second campus at Westmead would that change your decision and would you go to Westmead because it is only 15 minutes away? The feedback that we got from that was that as long as the Westmead campus was equivalent to the Camperdown campus, they would chose the Westmead campus for that travel time.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: But the Camperdown campus is full. That is my understanding.

Mr ROBINSON: No, it is not full. It has the ability to continue to grow. We have approved plans for another 220,000 square metres of space. But are we at a stage where we are looking at what our final student numbers would look like at Camperdown? That is an active conversation within the university. A decision has not

been arrived at. But at the moment there are—and I think it is in our submission—around 70,000 enrolments. Of those, the majority are taught at Camperdown Darlington. We are moving two of our campuses back on to Camperdown Darlington. We are moving our students from health sciences from Lidcombe back to Camperdown. We are also moving the Sydney College of the Arts. We are still growing and still have growth. Whether that is another 15 to 20 years really depends on our decision at Westmead and how quickly we decide to ramp up what we are doing at Westmead.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Mr Robinson, as I said at the beginning, I admire the desire to have a station there. But you have a pretty big competitive advantage over the other universities. You have the metro rail at Waterloo when that opens, which is within an active transport distance to the university up through Redfern. You also have Redfern Station, which you acknowledge will not service the Bankstown line when the conversion occurs. Then you have the metro at Central. The students who catch the metro train can get out at Central—like people do on the heavy rail—and then go down Broadway. You have the heavy rail at Central and you have an amazing new interface with the light rail, which goes out to the University of New South Wales and back through the city. Ideally you would have one at the university, but you have a very good catchment of public transport options. Students on the Bankstown line—if it is converted—could get out at Central and do the same walk that thousands and thousands of students do now.

Mr ROBINSON: I would question your number of "thousands and thousands". Our research says that that is not correct. It is not Sydney University students from Central that are creating that foot traffic. It is actually University of Technology Sydney and University of Notre Dame students. Our students are getting off at Redfern.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: We can interrogate that but, nonetheless, it is well serviced by public transport. I am not denying your desire to have a station there. That is a good outcome if we ever get there. But I am just pointing out that there are still good options there compared to other universities. Macquarie University has only just got a station. In my day it was a 12,000-car carpark. It was the biggest carpark at a university in Australia. When I went to Macquarie there were no public transport options.

Mr ROBINSON: We would acknowledge that we have got transport that is servicing the area at the moment. The issue for us is about the aspiration of the collaboration area. If we are going to grow the number of jobs that the New South Wales Government wants to grow, along with the partnership with the parties in that collaboration area, you are going to have more and more demand on those existing systems, particularly Redfern. The work that we have done on Waterloo found that whilst, as you say, that is in an active catchment, it is right at the extreme end of the active catchment.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Yes. It will require bicycle hire arrangements and the City of Sydney doing good bike connections for you and that type of thing.

Mr ROBINSON: Hence the reason we have been transport agnostic.

The CHAIR: Sometimes when we are thinking about extra travel times, particularly for students, we are thinking about students who are relatively privileged. We talked about students listening to music or whatever on the train. You painted this image of people who do not have much else to do. Earlier I touched on students with disability, for whom an extra commute time is clearly another level of inconvenience when they will have to travel the 400 metres at Bankstown between the heavy rail and the metro. Do you have any statistics on how many of your students, particularly those students in that area, also have caring responsibilities or jobs that they have to get to where an extra 15 minutes would actually make a huge difference to their lives?

Mr ROBINSON: No, we do not have that level of data.

The CHAIR: If only I ran a survey company, I could find out all this information.

Mr ROBINSON: That is why we are trying to make all of our data accessible to everybody so they can be mining it.

The Hon. WES FANG: I am amazed. I come from rural communities, where—

The CHAIR: Where you get to drive everywhere.

The Hon. WES FANG: Yes.

The CHAIR: If there are no further questions we will break for afternoon tea. Thank you for all your answers to our questions. You have 21 days to answer any questions taken on notice. The secretariat will be in touch.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

MARIE HEALY, Committee member, Hurlstone Park Association, via teleconference, affirmed and examined
HEATHER DAVIE, Member, Marrickville Residents Action Group, affirmed and examined
KELSIE DADD, Spokesperson, Save Marrickville, affirmed and examined

The CHAIR: I welcome our next witnesses. Starting with Associate Professor Dadd, could each of you please make a short opening statement? If you could keep it to under a couple of minutes that would be great.

Associate Professor DADD: Thank you for the opportunity to be here today and to give this statement. Save Marrickville is a group of residents taking positive action to ensure the growth of our suburb is properly planned for our community, the environment and future residents. We have a number of guiding principles and objectives, but as some of the groups that are present today are going to be talking about those—they will be covering the threat to our village character and heritage in our area and information about the metro system itself—I thought I would cover one of our other guiding principles, and that is the loss of inner-city industrial lands and industrial precincts. The development of the metro has already seen the destruction of large swathes of industrial land in Marrickville and Sydenham due to the building of the dive site and the associated infrastructure.

In my area there are other industrial precincts that are already approved for redevelopment or are in the planning stage for redevelopment. That includes the Victoria Road precinct and the Carrington Road precinct, which are both in Marrickville. Both areas employ significant numbers of people—many hundreds to thousands of people—and they are very important for the city's infrastructure. The first plans for the metro station precincts that we saw in earlier proposals saw further loss of industrial land even outside of the 800-metre precinct area for the station precincts. It seemed that industrial land was being targeted for redevelopment. We are concerned that this will be repeated with the introduction of the new metro system, which is, in large part, about redevelopment and housing.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Ms Davie.

Ms DAVIE: We would like to ask your Committee to recommend that the South West Metro does not proceed past Sydenham due to multiple negative effects and impacts. These include the unknown costs, the waste of scarce public funds replacing one railway line with another railway line, no justified need considering that there is much higher overcrowding on the inner-west line and the western line, a lack of transparency and good governance, suitability of a metro for commuting distances and future problems with loss of flexibility and reliability of the line if you cut the T3 line out of the Sydney rail network. The focus on development rather than improving public transport options, the loss of heritage and character in historical suburbs along the railway line, the destruction and impacts, social, environmental and economic, to the communities along the line during the five-year construction period are also considerations. The metro will not address the major long-term issues in the Sydney transport network. We ask that an alternative metro route be investigated and built from Sydenham.

Howard Collins, CEO of Sydney Trains, earlier in the year talked about the alternative to spend \$3 billion on modernising and digitalising the rail network. This is the cheapest and fastest way to increase capacity. It could increase capacity by 40 per cent and give the entire network trains every three minutes. Other senior rail executives' advice has been against the metro and should be heeded. Building the South West Metro squanders the opportunity to upgrade the current system and to build new lines where they are needed. There has been mention of how many people have been for it and against it, but of the 549 submissions to the environmental impact statement in 2017, only 3 per cent supported the metro. Please listen to people's pleas and help us all to plan for better public transport in the future.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Dr Healy.

Dr HEALY: Thank you. The Hurlstone Park Association [HPA] does not support the conversion of our sturdy, fully functioning and historic railway line to a privately run inferior metro. The Government has failed to convince us of its merits simply because it appears to lack merits. The negative impacts will far outweigh any perceived benefits, both locally across Sydney and statewide. The Government has been secretive in its dealings and, rather than acting for the people, has turned on communities to force onto them a costly project that lacks a social licence to proceed. I ask, on behalf of the HPA, that the Committee puts public interests ahead of vested interests and recommends this metro not proceed for Sydenham, so that options with merit that will benefit the whole network can be prioritised.

This project pits those who value community and local character against those who value money. Heritage and local character impacts are particularly concerning for our suburbs. In addition, we are fully

supportive of the submission presented by the Sydenham Bankstown Alliance and the Save T3 Bankstown Line and the inner-west's concerns about the State's infrastructure issues. On watching the webcast I was concerned about members' questions about their legitimacy, but it was pleasing to see that the Locals for Southwest Metro were similarly questioned. I was also concerned about a committee members speaking about the lack of public transport in rural areas and therefore portraying community members as precious as they will increase commute times because of this so-called world-class metro.

Surely then offering four-minute services on the peak is not important. If saving 15 minutes is not important, why do it? The Government's continual portrayal of community members as nimbies and developers or property speculators as stakeholders is one that has contributed to so much distrust about this project. The quality of altruism is alive and well in the inner-west and inner-south-west of Sydney, and the majority of community submissions about this project, many of which I have read, have been detailed, well considered, well researched and about the bigger picture issues such as network, environmental, heritage and social impacts. The cost of this conversion is diverting funds from signalling and accessibility upgrades across the network and a rural upgrades. It comes down to the Government demonstrating the right priorities and, in this case, we feel they got it wrong. Thank you.

The CHAIR: Thank you.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Associate Professor Dadd, please elaborate on the heritage areas that are at risk from the proposed conversion and the consequential development that might flow from it.

Associate Professor DADD: What we are worried about is mainly the proposed development that will go along with the construction. There is, of course, our heritage railway station and we are worried about that. But we have been assured that those stations will stay as they are, and I will take the Government at its word on that. I will go back to the Marrickville plan and the revised Marrickville plan that came out with earlier iterations of the metro. In that we saw large areas that were to be up-zoned along with the introduction of the metro system. Somebody had gone there with a protractor and some coloured pencils and drawn circles at 400 metres and 800 metres around each of the stations along the line and then suggested that these were areas that could be developed. That took no regard of what was there.

Many of the houses—in fact, the majority of the houses in the Marrickville area—are not heritage listed. It does not have any heritage listing, but we see it as having importance to the character of the area. It is one of the older inner-city suburbs, so there are houses dating back to the mid-1800s. But it is also a site that has seen significant immigration and settlement. We first saw the English come in after the Indigenous people, but then we saw the Greeks and the Italians come in, buy up the houses that were built by the English and modify those to suit themselves. The Vietnamese came in later in another wave of immigration and did the same thing. Many of the houses in my local area are not what you would consider heritage items, but they are part of the character of the area.

The character is one of immigration and housing development. We would like to see that preserved as much as any other heritage item. We are worried that, even though the planning has gone back to councils, there will be significant development in the area. I have spoken to neighbours who have had developers approach them offering ridiculous sums of money for their houses. We see that it will happen by stealth, if not by planning a station precinct, where one house is sold off and then another, and as soon as you end up with an apartment building next to you, you start to sell your house as well. So we are really worried that this is going to wipe out large areas of the character of Marrickville.

The CHAIR: Dr Healy, from a Hurlstone Park perspective is there anything you want to say in relation to the heritage aspects?

Dr HEALY: Yes, thank you very much. There was an assumption made by the Metro people that heritage across the corridor had already been adequately assessed. It has not. The councils are incredibly behind in their heritage assessments. There was no new heritage assessment done for the Metro, either in the project area or in the Metro precinct areas around the train stations. The Burra Charter, which is the guiding principle for treatment of heritage in Australia, was virtually ignored. The railway stations along the line are all heritage listed locally, and there are three that are State heritage listed. There are several booking offices and other heritage items that are part of the rail infrastructure that have rare and social values.

Many of these were planned to be wholesale demolished. The Government has back-tracked on that but it has not been specific as to how it is going to treat the heritage and what it is going to do. We are really concerned because this Government does not have a great track record on heritage. We have seen the demolition of beautiful homes in Haberfield for the WestConnex. The National Trust described that as the worst hit to heritage in

Australia's history. We do not want this to be repeated in this corridor. There are many small community centres with lots of local character that are yet to be assessed by the local councils. It has been based on a wrong assumption from the start that heritage has already been assessed in the corridor.

The CHAIR: Thank you.

The Hon. WES FANG: Associate Professor Dadd, listening to your testimony earlier, you were running through the changes that Marrickville has experienced—obviously Indigenous to English European to European to maybe Asian ethnic type influences. When you talk about the heritage of Marrickville, it has always been changing for the past 200 years or thereabouts. Is this not just another evolution of Marrickville? Are we not just seeing the continuing evolution of what Sydney is becoming?

Associate Professor DADD: It is in a way, but we are seeing large swathes of the suburb being slated for redevelopment. When people came in, the houses stayed. There were a few that were demolished for apartments, and we are starting to see that again with some of the complying development that is around but the plans for the Metro have up to 6,000 homes in the 800 metre area that were in an area that could be redeveloped without going through the local council. We also can see development happening in Marrickville now.

We have new apartments being built, and many of the new apartments are going up above shops along our shopping strips. So they are not impacting on the local character. The facades of the buildings not only stay the same but many of them are being done up so that they look quite nice. That type of development brings new people into the community but enhances the local community. It brings people back to the local shopping strips. It does not see the destruction of the houses. Those houses, with their modifications as a result of immigration over the years, is part of our character. We like our Greek-ified little residences, or to walk past houses with a Buddha out the front from the Vietnamese. It is all part of the character of Marrickville, and what brings people into the area. I would hate to see that destroyed.

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN: But characters change over time, do they not?

Associate Professor DADD: Yes, they do. That is what I have just said. It has changed over time, and we are seeing it changing with the introduction of the new apartments that are coming in above the shopping strip. But if we were to take these large swathes of the suburb and convert them to very high apartments—we are talking about high-rise apartments—then that character would be destroyed. That is large areas you lose in the suburb. It is not a small house here or there. It is quite different.

The Hon. WES FANG: It is interesting listening to some of the different arguments. Some are around heritage. Some are around over-development but there has always been change. I guess I am just seeking what it is that you are objecting to, and that is a change in heritage as opposed to an over-development per se.

Associate Professor DADD: No, it is opposition to over-development. Development is fine. We are going to see development; we are seeing development. We are not objecting to that. Some of the new developments that have gone in are quite nice. Some of them are not.

The Hon. WES FANG: That is subjective.

Associate Professor DADD: Yes, it is. Well, no, some of them are cracked and already starting to fall apart, so I cannot say that they are good developments. Over-development is another thing. It has not only impacts to the housing stock but also brings in a large number of people into the community that is not set up for that number of people. These are small areas that are already densely populated. I do not think a lot of people take that into account. We are not looking at an outer suburban area where everybody is on a relatively large block. We are looking at areas of tiny little houses on small blocks.

The Hon. WES FANG: But you understand the competing interests. Some of the testimony we had this morning was about the need for more affordable housing. That, I guess, gravitates towards higher density. Then you have, on the other spectrum, people wanting to keep the heritage. I guess you are both in opposition to the line but—

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Point of order: That is not a question.

The Hon. WES FANG: The question is: what do you see as the point where people are just objecting to progress because of progress's sake? How do you validate different concerns?

Associate Professor DADD: I think it is difficult to validate different concerns because many of them are personal, but I am worried about development to the extent that it, as I said, destroys the character, but also over-runs the infrastructure. Much of this is not planned. The infrastructure comes later, or people start to realise

that the infrastructure is not there, later. At the moment our schools are at capacity. We have one of the lowest amounts of green space in the Sydney area in our LGA. We just do not have the community facilities. We are struggling at the moment with the increase in people. The local government area is meeting its housing targets, as it is, with the development that is going on. So, as I said, we are not opposed to development. There is development going on, and we see that that will happen. Fine. It will, in some ways bring life to our community, especially around the shopping areas that are dying.

But destroying large swathes of the community for high rise that is not supported in any way will just destroy the character of the area. You spoke about affordable housing. Affordable housing is something that developers agree to. They will put in a certain percentage of affordable housing. Affordable housing is not high-rise development in Marrickville. If you have a look at the cost of those apartments they are in no way affordable. This is catering to a young urban population that has money or can borrow money to move into the area. These are not cheap; they are not affordable. If we were to try and get affordable housing we would have to make every one of these developments about 50 per cent affordable housing to come anywhere near the targets, and that is not going to happen.

The Hon. WES FANG: I guess what I am trying to do is to tease out from you what exactly the objections are, because what we are looking at, at the moment, is the conversion of the Sydenham to Bankstown line from the existing rail line to a Metro and why different groups are opposing it. You obviously have an objection to the loss of heritage and the potential over-development. We heard this morning other evidence. But relating back to the line that is the Sydenham to Bankstown line and converting it from the existing line to Metro, do you see any disadvantages in the transportation of people from one service, which is the existing train service, to a Metro service?

Dr HEALY: Could I answer that question because I have—

The CHAIR: Please do, Dr Healy. Go ahead.

Dr HEALY: From talking to a lot of people in our suburb and across the corridor, we feel that the metro is offering us an inferior service on many levels. Firstly, it is visually unappealing. There will be less seating. No matter how you put it, each train you get onto will have less seats and you are more likely to be standing. It will have a private operator, and in this corridor we value public service. We value our train drivers, our train guards and our platform staff. We have concerns about safety issues. A man from Locals for Metro South West said he wants the metro because he has got kids with prams. Toddlers and families are being separated on the Sydney Metro Northwest because of the glass opening, loaded and unloading situations there. They have had more than 40 problems that have been reported with that. There are no mechanisms to rejoin the heavy rail network. The heritage impacts, because of the associated development, will be significant both along the railway line and in the area around it. There will be more connections and less convenience. They are just some of them that I can list off the top of my head. We do not see a shiny new metro as necessarily progress when all of those billions of dollars of public money could be spent improving the entire network and improving accessibility at all railway stations in New South Wales. At the moment I think there are about 44 per cent of stations that have accessibility. Why just upgrade them with the metro? Why not spend this money here, keep our operating railway and upgrade all the stations for the people with disabilities. It is not about anti-progress; it is about where the priorities are.

The Hon. WES FANG: I would argue that we could potentially walk and chew gum at the same time.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Is this a statement or question?

The Hon. WES FANG: It is a leading comment into a question. I love that you keep—

The CHAIR: Make it quick.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: You make a lot of statements, Mr Fang.

The Hon. WES FANG: I make a lot of statements that lead to questions. You need to set the tone. I am very much into setting the tone.

The CHAIR: Order! Ask the question, please.

The Hon. WES FANG: We can walk and chew gum at the same time. The Government can upgrade stations and also build the metro. A lot of the points that you raised about objection to the metro are, I guess, at best, philosophical. Frequency will increase. The number of seats per hour will increase. The amenity is questionable when you say it is not as attractive—

The CHAIR: Is there a question, Mr Fang?

The Hon. WES FANG: I am just wondering how do you justify some of those arguments against it when they are purely subjective?

Dr HEALY: I think the Government advertising "Tomorrow's Sydney" is fairly subjective too. The Government says that it has consulted with communities. That is fairly subjective too because a lot of the submissions have actually been complaining about the lack of genuine consultation. All of it is subjective and I would say that the Government's arguments are just as subjective. We have heard evidence. Unfortunately, the Government has been so secretive about this project that we have had to get a lot of our information from the media. We heard from previous rail executives speaking against some of the Government's justifications. So it is very difficult for us to believe the Government when we hear so many counterarguments. The Government redacts all of its feedback and business cases. There has been so much secrecy that we are really distrustful of the justification. To say it is subjective, it is a bit difficult because we really do not have the facts.

The Hon. WES FANG: But is that not a chicken-and-the-egg—

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Mr Fang has had a number of questions.

The CHAIR: We will come back to you Mr Fang. Could I ask a quick question, pushing further into that line of inquiry? We have not really looked at the private nature of the metro much in our hearing today, or at the combination of a metro operator as a developer or having an interest in property. If instead this proposal were to increase capacity on the existing line with digital signalling and upgrading stations et cetera, and as part of that there was a stated aim of also increasing the density of development along that line, how would your response differ if it was all public and using the same, as opposed to this private metro conversion?

Associate Professor DADD: I do not think my response would differ significantly because that sounds very much like the metro plans that came out earlier with the station precincts. That was not necessarily a private developer. That was the Government saying these areas are available to be up-zoned and redeveloped. Again, I would say I am against overdevelopment and loss of character in the area. I prefer things to be in public hands very much—that is just my political bias, if you like. But in terms of the overdevelopment, that would not change my answer significantly.

The CHAIR: Ms Davie?

Ms DAVIE: People accept that there will be development. It is just overdevelopment. If we look at the north-west line and the developments that are proposed—when we looked at the Castle Hill Showground, which was thousands of new dwellings. We look at even Martin Place, 29 stories, 23 stories, 43 stories along the line. Those sorts of developments do not fit along the Sydenham-to-Bankstown line. For a start, we have the aircraft obstacle height controls. It would just wipe out—with the 6,000 new dwellings that were demanded to be around the station, that was just going to clear-fell the suburb; the villages of Marrickville, Dulwich Hill and Hurlstone Park would be gone. People are not against development; they would just like it to be a bit more sensitive to the area and the topography, and consider the congestion and the infrastructure that is already there and lacking.

The CHAIR: Dr Healy?

Dr HEALY: One of the justifications that the Government has been rolling out is that this conversion was to act as a catalyst for growth. If this was a new railway going to a new area that previously did not have this public transport option, you would understand growth occurring along that corridor. But these are established suburbs that we are talking about in what is one of the most heavily populated corridors in Sydney anyway. This is where people perceive an inequity. I think they are right. I think, as Peter Olive said, it is a Trojan horse for growth and growth as being a circular thing where the metro is to encourage growth and there will be growth with the metro. It is that inequity and the fact that they are established suburbs that are high in heritage value—a lot of that value has not been assessed—that concerns a lot of locals.

The CHAIR: I am just trying to understand this better. It seems to me that at least from the perspective of Ms Davie and Associate Professor Dadd, there is an opposition to the up-zoning, regardless of the means by which the capacity is increased on the T3, whether it is increase in digital signalling or whether it is through the metro, whereas I understand from Dr Healy that her position is perhaps slightly different. But this is highlighting the question of, if we accept that there is going to be growth along that corridor, why the metro would increase the growth in a way that the T3 would not. Does anyone have any comment?

Dr HEALY: Yes. It was rolled out in conjunction with the urban renewal strategy. While planning has gone back to council, the State Government is imposing on council the growth that they want to occur. This corridor has been targeted by the Government as an area for growth. It was part of aligning transport with growth

but there is already a rail line out here so it would be much better, we think, to align transport and growth in an area that does not have the transport and provides some transport infrastructure to there.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, Ms Davie?

Ms DAVIE: The company that has the contract for the Northwest line is a Hong Kong development company and that is part of the way they value-capture along the way through building development, and it is a model that has been used throughout Asia where you have high-rise towers around railway stations. So that is a great concern.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Can I ask about that? That was going to be my next question; about exploring the mechanics of that value-capture process. The operator does not control the land on either side of the rail corridor so it seems to me that the only way they could potentially control the value-capture process is by developing over the railway corridor. Are you able to elaborate on how that might occur? What sort of vulnerability, potentially, do the current arrangements have that might lead to that being a consequence of the conversion?

Ms DAVIE: A corporation has been established to enable the metro to acquire and purchase land along the corridor, so that is of concern to local people because the control does leave the hands of council and local residents and local decision-making if that happens. There would be more acquisition of land closer to the stations to enable them to develop around the stations.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: But surely it is good urban planning to increase density around transport hubs?

Ms DAVIE: Yes.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: And not to build suburbs down in Wilton and sprawl out suburbs where people are remote from services. That is good urban planning.

Ms DAVIE: Yes, we accept that but it is within reason. If you are going to put a 29-storey tower in a heritage suburb that has established street patterns with a lot of character, just destroying whole streetscapes of communities, is not what people and the communities want.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: How broad is that capacity for the metro corporation to acquire and develop land?

Ms DAVIE: It is unknown and that is of concern.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: How far from the corridor are they able to venture?

Ms DAVIE: We do not know. Nobody knows.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Do we know if there are any constraints? If they were to develop above rail corridors, presumably that would fall within the State significant development. It would not be something that local councils would have any control over. Is that your understanding?

Ms DAVIE: That is what would probably happen.

Associate Professor DADD: And that is a real concern. As soon as it goes out of the local council's hands, then our local environmental plan [LEP] no longer has any power and we will see very high high-rise towers.

Dr HEALY: Can I make a comment about urban planning? Part of urban planning is the retention of local character and making areas liveable that communities want to be in. It is not about numbers.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I do not know if you were here earlier when evidence was given by other residents associations. Locals for Metro South West suggested that, in their view, development had been positive for its area and, in fact, there was a suggestion that even poorly planned development had brought a number of benefits. The specific gentleman was living in Canterbury, and I know you two are representing Marrickville, but I would like your comment on the suggestion that when you bring development to an area you bring vibrancy, you bring more businesses—

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Good development.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Good development, yes. I am cautious about incorrectly paraphrasing what he said but, nonetheless, his evidence was that good development brings many benefits to communities,

so I am wondering whether you would agree with that or whether you have an alternative view about the impact of the development that might be associated with this project on your communities.

Ms DAVIE: I have lived in Marrickville for more than 35 years so I have seen lots of changes there. Some of the current, new developments are very shoddily built; the use of better bricks, cement slabs. You can see them falling down in a few years' time. So there is great concern that a lot of our houses—beautiful old houses over 100 years old, villas, stone houses—can be wiped out for these cement buildings that will not stand the test of time, long term. So, yes, there has been development and the previous Marrickville council was very careful in their LEP to plan for development along the shopping strips so that there was shop-top housing. That enabled them to keep the residential streets intact.

So, yes, there has been development but the community is very disappointed in the quality of that development. Yes, Marrickville has more bars, more hotels, music in old warehouses. It is a very vibrant community. The developers use this wonderful sense of community—and it is, it is like living in a country town. When my country friends walk down the street with me and I talk to lots of people, they are amazed that I know so many people. It has a wonderful sense of community. Through a lot of this high-rise development, that sense of community will be lost. The other thing is that developers are only wanting to build studios, one-beds, two-beds. That is changing the community. Families cannot afford to buy a house, they cannot afford to buy a unit. A two-bed unit is \$1.2 million. So, although we have development, it is not such a change for the betterment, in my opinion.

Associate Professor DADD: I would also like to add in there: bringing new businesses into the area. Many of the new apartments that have been built are on existing shops so that the shops that were there often either move back into the area or just stay there as the new development is built. We have had a few apartments built from scratch and many of those have shops underneath that are empty or change hands incredibly rapidly. They are not bringing in businesses that are sustainable so I cannot see that that is a really good point to support the development.

Dr HEALY: Could I make a comment on your specific question? I looked at the webcast and those comments about, "Well, even poor development has had good consequences." No, it has not. The development along Canterbury Road under the previous Canterbury council has been widely criticised. The council had a discussion paper and looked into that and examined it. They said it has resulted in a toxic and congested road. It is full of wind tunnels. I have been inside some of the units. The drains are rusting. It has not actually been a positive thing. Hurlstone Park, itself, has been surrounded by a wall of mediocrity of ugly, box-like developments—again, approved under the previous Canterbury council. We have the options of going to the dentist or having your hair done or going into a property shop to look into buying one of the units. That is about the only shops that are there and the others are empty. I would not say it has had a positive impact. The problem is, yes, there will be development, but it is the scale and type of development that is coming with the Metro that is concerning. Again, it is the department of Planning—and previously Department of Planning and Environment—that has stated the importance of local character, community, green space and liveability. We have not seen those improve with those recent developments.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I just make the observation in regards to the comments around bedroom mixes and active street-fronts with shops in the bottom of developments that that is council policy, not State Government policy. The local environment plan or development control plan of the council will determine that, so you could raise that with your council if you are concerned around that. In your opening statement, Professor Dadd, you were lamenting the transition away from industrial land. I was a councillor on South Sydney Council and saw it happening. The warehousing has moved out to the M7 very quickly. The challenge then is that obviously you get infill development and mixed-used development, which is what has happened down in the South Sydney Council area in Alexandria, but also to introduce creative industries and other types of things. That is an opportunity for evolution for Marrickville, wouldn't you think? You cannot romantically keep empty factories or factories that are not viable.

Associate Professor DADD: We do not have empty factories or factories that are not viable. It is a vibrant industrial area. They are full. I have not seen an empty factory as I wander around those industrial areas. I do not think that is really a good point to be making. I think there are only so many creative industries that you can have in an area. We already have creative precincts in the area that have taken over old warehouse buildings. We see our fair share of that. Many of those rely on slightly more heavy industries. They are clusters of businesses, rather than just one little creative. They rely on another business nearby that may be a heavy industrial.

The other thing is that the inner city does need its heavy industrial as well. It needs IN1 and IN2 zoning. Marrickville in particular and Sydenham, where we have lost a lot of the factories now, support the airport.

There are a lot of food manufacturing businesses in the area that supply food to the airport. If they were to go out west then all of that would have to be transported by trucks into the city. There are a lot of clothing manufacturers and smash repairers. I like to be able to take my car to a local place to get it repaired and a lot of other people in the inner city do as well. There is a place for industry in the inner city. It cannot just be all creatives. There are only so many creative things we are going to buy.

Ms DAVIE: Could I just talk about comfort as a passenger? You did ask lots of people about that before and I was wriggling in my seat wanting to answer. When the Metro is complete I will be at least 74. I am a very good user of public transport. I am very, very concerned about the seating arrangements. We are going to go from 70 per cent seating and 30 per cent standing to the reverse. I can only just reach the handle on the Metro, so standing long distances would be very difficult—not just for me but for other elderly people, for children, for mothers with young children with bags and babies. I see that as a big concern.

The documents say that the Metro is customer focused, but it has not considered the ageing population and the extended families that use the Sydenham to Bankstown line on a Sunday. The train is full of prams, grandma, grandpa—everybody going for their day out. It is going to be much harder for families to use the Metro. Just to get the prams and everybody onto the train before the barriers close has been a problem with the new Metro Northwest. It is not going to be such a comfortable trip. With the capacity levels quoted, they talk about increasing the capacity, but they are crush levels. They are the Tokyo crush levels, where you need the people to push you onto the train. Body-to-body commuting is not pleasant. I can see that that will put a lot of people off travelling on the train if they have got to travel a long way while standing up in very close proximity to someone else's body.

It says that there will be better access to give for educational facilities. We have already talked about the universities, but there is a lot of young children and high school children who catch the train to their schools. It is not going to be so good for them. I do see people using their computers, studying and reading their books on the train. I see a lot of work being done on the train. That is not going to be possible if you are hanging on. Luggage, prams, backpacks, shopping trolleys—there is a lot of those on our trains. When you are in a very crowded situation that is not going to be good.

A lot of people do use the train to get to Circular Quay to the cruise ships and the Opera House. With six carriages, there will be a lot of overcrowding. The Metros are designed for short distances and highly densely populated areas where as many people get on as get off. They are not built for commuting long distances. After two or three stops from Bankstown the Metro is going to be chock-a-block. People are going to have to wait for the next train or the next train or the next train because of the design of the Metro. There will be longer wait times for some people. The travel time reductions are not believable. We have already talked about changing trains. For example, if you want to go to Circular Quay you can walk 800 metres from Martin Place. That is quite a long walk. If you have got young children or you are elderly that is not going to be very comfortable.

The other thing with the travel times is that because our stations are old, they are all curved. The new stations are specifically designed to have the barriers and the automatic doors. Our stations are all curved. In constructing those, they were going to knock down our stations and rebuild them but that was too expensive, so now we are going to have mechanical platforms. As the train pulls up the mechanical platform will come out, then the gates will open and people can enter the train. That is going to take more time. The dwell time of 20 seconds to make it faster is not going to be possible with mechanical platforms, because when the gates close the platforms will have to come back in and then the train can depart.

Security is another issue. There is no driver, there is no guard. I have caught the train for a very long time. I have seen some very, very unpleasant incidents. I am not saying they happen all the time, but I would not like to be underground for a long distance experiencing similar things that I have seen. The Docklands Light Railway in London does not have a driver, but there is a guard there to make sure that everybody is on safely and everybody is off safely. Monitoring from Tallawong is not of great comfort. There is also the concern of the narrow tunnels, the width of the tunnels. What is going to happen if you are stuck? Some people have already been stuck underground when the computers have broken down.

Ms DAVIE: I was in the London underground once when a fire broke out and the crew were wonderful getting everybody out. There will be no crew. If there are people in wheelchairs, how are people going to get out? That is of great concern to me. Personal safety for women—reports from Japan about sexual harassment of women. Some young women carry safety pins. There are new stickers available to purchase. There are invisible sprays to spray people where people can be identified later. I know of one young woman who lived in Japan and she purchased a bicycle and took her life in her hands riding a bike to work rather than being constantly harassed.

The Hon. WES FANG: Point of order: I accept that these are some issues but I think that we are now straying very far away from our terms of reference for this inquiry.

The CHAIR: To the point of order: It is on safety.

Ms DAVIE: Yes, safety.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Why don't you just let them give their evidence? You do not necessarily have to agree. We will assess the evidence when it comes. Let us hear the evidence.

The CHAIR: I like it.

Associate Professor DADD: I am sorry, surely we can compare Metro systems overseas and what is happening to, say, what might happen on a Metro system in Sydney. I have travelled extensively on Metro systems overseas.

The Hon. WES FANG: As have I. I have caught many Metro systems in Singapore and they are amazing, fantastic—

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Point of order:

Associate Professor DADD: Singapore is very small. I have caught the Metro overseas in many cities.

The Hon. WES FANG: Singapore is about the size of Sydney.

Associate Professor DADD: And I have trouble reaching the handholds. I am also quite small so it is very difficult. You have to find a space near the edge to try to get a hold. I have also recently caught the Metro in Shanghai where I had trouble getting off the train for the people trying to crowd on the train to get the few seats that were available. This was the end of the line and they wanted those seats.

The CHAIR: I remember that experience in London all the time, trying to clamour to get off.

Associate Professor DADD: To get off because they wanted to get on because there were not seats and it was a long way on that line to get into the city.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: These issues are not apparent in the north-west though.

Ms DAVIE: And isn't consumer service part of the brief? Is that the portfolio committee?

The CHAIR: Yes, it is.

Ms DAVIE: I will finish by saying that the alternative arrangements over the five years will disrupt the lives of people tremendously. You know on a Saturday when there is track work I allow 1½ hours to get into town, a journey that takes a minimum of 30 minutes. I feel very sorry for the people who have to get up early, get their families ready, get to and from work as it is going to be a highly disruptive time for the people. I think that is going to be very difficult.

The Hon. WES FANG: Oh well, let us not build another thing then.

Ms DAVIE: No, we want something built but it should be built to an area where there is not a well-functioning and well serviced line.

The CHAIR: If any questions were taken on notice the secretariat will be in touch and you have 21 days to answer them.

(Witnesses withdrew.)

BARBARA COOREY, Convenor, Keep our Area Suburban, sworn and examined

The CHAIR: I invite you to begin with a short opening statement.

Ms COOREY: I have a supplementary submission to the documents that I have already submitted to the committee. I have prepared six volumes for committee members individually tabbed with the actual submission attached to it. I seek leave to rely on that submission this afternoon.

The CHAIR: What is in the folder?

Ms COOREY: There are a number of documents. It refers to a summary document at the front.

The CHAIR: Given our experience last time with documents tabled, shall we just accept them and review them at a later stage in relation to confidentiality.

The Hon. WES FANG: Dangerous, but sure.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Yes.

Ms COOREY: There is a copy for each committee member and they have been individually tabbed—that is the lawyer in me. The supplementary submission outlines serious governance and probity issues, a lack of public accountability and a lack of sound empirical evidence and rationale in relation to the proposed conversion of the Sydney trains network T3 Bankstown line between Sydenham and Bankstown to Metro and the accompanying development. In fact, there are very serious concerns in relation to commuter safety and comfort, increased travel times for commuters and students alike, a loss of access to the city circle from the conversion of this line into Metro, a lack of consultation with shopkeepers who will share the same fate, I believe, as the Light Rail businesses regarding construction and noise disruption to businesses within 200 to 300 metre radius of the proposed Metro. These concerns centre on the rail plus property model espoused by the Mass Transit Rail Corporation [MTR] which has been alluded to this afternoon, but this is a very important issue that the committee needs to come to terms with.

What is MTR Corporation's model for commuter travel in this country? The MTR Corporation has been chosen to run the Sydney Metro Northwest effectively privatising rail commuting in New South Wales for the first time. The role of New South Wales transport and the effective privatisation of Sydney Metro Corporation, the role of the developer lobby groups and the role of the former disgraced corrupt Canterbury Council, including senior executive officers and elected councillors and members of their families is of concern. Of most serious concern is the apparent land banking and the resultant land racketeering of properties in the corridor that has seen property owners approached and some contracts entered into prior to the announcement on 14 October 2015 of the Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Strategy and the Sydenham to Bankstown Metro.

We have been fighting this since October 2015. This has been our struggle; my residents, my former constituents. I am the former deputy mayor of the old Canterbury council when it was run very efficiently and very honestly. We have been fighting this and today is the culmination of that feat. I thank the members of the Committee and I thank the New South Wales Parliament for allowing us to air our grievances today. A live issue also continues to be apparent stonewalling by Transport for NSW to Government Information (Public Access) [GIPA] applications by various private citizens, including myself, in order to obtain information which is of public interest in these matters.

The case has not been made out to convert the 124-year-old Sydenham to Bankstown Sydney trains network line from double-decker Waratah trains with a driver and a conductor, in comparison to a single-deck driverless conductor-less metro train which we have heard ad nauseam today holds only 30 per cent of the seats compared to the double-decker Waratah train. Furthermore, the Committee should place very little weight on the evidence of the following groups: Locals for Metro Southwest, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue together with the Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce. It is my view that these groups are heavily conflicted and noting that the Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce had direct support from the WestConnex corporation and is not representative of the shopkeepers of Canterbury, Campsie, Belmore, Lakemba, Punchbowl, and appears to have very little support from the shopkeepers of Bankstown itself.

Locals for Metro Southwest is representative of property owners in the streets earmarked for high-rise development in the suburbs of Belmore and Canterbury together with developers who have been actively land banking in the suburb of Canterbury. The group was launched in 2018, organised by architects, planners and property developers, of whom many do not reside in the suburbs of that corridor. It was launched at the Canterbury Bankstown Leagues Club where the Minister for Transport's personal video message was played to the attendees,

which included myself. I was there. No information has been provided as to how this video was obtained and no information appears on the ministerial log of any meeting between the Minister and the representatives for Locals for Metro Southwest. This concerns me and it should concern the Parliament.

Members of the Committee, I would like to discuss the bottleneck myth which has been spoken about ad nauseam by the New South Wales transport as a reason for cannibalising a 124-year-old perfectly functioning under-patronised heavy rail line. I have lived in that area all my life. I have never heard of any complaints about the T3 line. In fact, I have been sitting on that line and I used to say, "What a wonderful line we have, I hope nothing happens to it". Little did I know. As early as 2012 in a document headed "Sydney's Rail Future"—I have provided members with that document—when the Premier was the former Minister for Transport, this critical report, on page nine under the heading "Suburban bottlenecks", the Premier endorsed under her signature:

The Western and North Shore lines are the key bottlenecks of the network, as these lines have the highest level of interchange and station congestion in the CBD.

There is no reference to the Bankstown line in that document. You have that document to read at your leisure. I do suggest that every Committee member avails themselves of this document. On page 18, for the first time ever, in 2012, unbeknownst to the residents in my area:

The Bankstown line will be converted for rapid transport trains, allowing the introduction of faster services with "turn up and go" convenience for commuters with services more than doubling after the connection for the new rapid transit system.

This is the first occasion that the conversion of the T3 Bankstown line from Sydenham to Lidcombe via Cabramatta has been mentioned in any publicly available document. It is to be noted that at this time the T3 Bankstown line did not have the patronage capacity for the rapid transit trains metro. It was under capacity, under patronised, it did not tick the boxes. But, we got a signing off by Premier Gladys Berejiklian to convert our line with no consultation with us, the commuters. It goes on to say that there was supposed to be three meetings held prior to the master plan being finalised. Guess what, ladies and gentlemen of the Committee, there was only one meeting held under the GIPA documents that have been obtained by Roydon Ng. I do urge you to read the GIPA material because it makes no sense. There was no reference to my area. There is a person on this Committee that used to work for MTR Corporation. There are a lot of questions that will be answered through the GIPA material.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Can I clarify, you were referring to members of this Committee?

Ms COOREY: Yes.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: When you said there was a person on this Committee?

Ms COOREY: No, I meant the project control group that was set up as part of the Sydney rail's future modernising trains. That committee met only once. The members of that committee are in the GIPA documents. It is really interesting. From today on I do not want to hear that the Bankstown line causes a bottleneck because it does not. According to the Premier's own document it does not cause a bottleneck. I will continue. The other concern I have is that John Brew, Ron Christie, Bob O'Loughlin and Dick Day, who I would have thought would have been summonsed to appear at the Committee, presented a submission to New South Wales transport on 3 July 2015, some four months prior to the announcement of the conversion of the line.

This document was released via GIPA and it appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 19 December 2017. These particular gentlemen said that the takeover of the existing rail line between Sydenham and Bankstown for the Government's single-deck metro train will remove the relief valve for the network and leave no escape route. They also make the following telling comment that Heather Davie alluded to previously: Metro trains are best suited to highly populated densely trafficked populated commuter areas over short journeys and not long park-and-ride journeys. We are park-and-ride: 70 per cent of our commuters take the train from Bankstown to the city to get to their jobs; 21 million users tap on and off between Sydenham and Bankstown every year; in peak hour between 5 a.m. and 9 a.m. 100,000 people tap on and off between Bankstown and Sydenham.

How are you going to put 100,000 people on buses? That is 10 times the number of people from the Northwest Metro that were put on buses. Let me tell you the north-west commuters are happy with their service, albeit there are a lot of problems with it at the moment. They have never had a 124-year-old heavy rail network. They have never experienced what we have experienced. We have had our line for 124 years. In one sweep of the pen people are making up these bottleneck myths because, I believe, that our problem came about because of the corrupt Canterbury Council. The council was given a lot of documents in 2015 about the conversion of the line. They were given the rezoning maps. They are all in here for you to see under my GIPA. We believe that a lot of land banking started to occur in that corridor prior to the announcement in October 2015. There were members of the council themselves and their families actively going out there and touting for business in the corridor.

I want to make that point very, very clear today. That was not part of Operation Dasha's points of reference to investigate. But I believe nothing less than a royal commission into the old Canterbury Council—the announcement of the Sydenham to Bankstown urban renewal strategy and the announcement of the conversion of that line needs to be fully investigated. Royal commission. I thank you for taking an interest and giving us the platform here today to vent our concerns, but it will go a lot further than this particular Committee. My concerns are real. I have a legal background. I believe what happened in our corridor was what happened in Queensland. There is an article that appeared in *The Sydney Morning Herald* 15 days prior to the announcement of the Sydenham to Bankstown urban renewal strategy corridor. People have been falling over themselves—developers have been falling over themselves to gain option agreements in the corridor and it has been to the detriment of my area.

But the funny point about all of that is that it is going to be a white elephant if they do this metro. I will tell you why it will be a white elephant. Most of the areas that are proposed to be densified are National Trust conservation zones. There are war service homes in my area. The first war service home was built in Belmore 21 July 1919. Our areas of Belmore, Campsie, Canterbury, Lakemba—we had the veterans from World War I and World War II. They came back into these areas to recuperate and live the rest of their lives. The gift that we are being given by the State Government is the demolition of their homes. That is the gift we are giving to our war vets. I have land title deeds that have never been looked at that show the War Service Homes Commission is still stamped on the titles of these properties. These properties are all earmarked for demolition so that MTR Corporation can have the patronage to run a private single-deck metro between Sydenham and Bankstown.

We have become the answer to the State's problem for housing. The department of planning wants to do 664,000 units, or 700,000 units. We believe that had we not stopped the strategy back from 2015, they were going to pump over 300,000 units between Sydenham and Bankstown. Every street, every suburb between Canterbury to Lakemba/Wiley Park would have been up-zoned and demolished—every house. That is what we have stopped. Madam Chair, I have some photographs of the heritage homes I would like to table so that members of the Committee can understand the sorts of areas we are looking at to be demolished for the patronage for the metro. This will never happen. Some of the most eminent architects in the county—internationally acclaimed—signed a petition in 2017. That petition went to Mrs Lucy Turnbull, the Chief Commissioner of the Greater Sydney Commission, to alert her to the—

The CHAIR: Ms Coorey, if I could just interrupt you, I am worried about there being enough time for questions.

Ms COOREY: I understand. Sorry about it, Chair.

The CHAIR: We are happy to accept the photographs to be tabled.

Ms COOREY: Yes, there are the photographs of the heritage homes. Also, I have photographs of the actual models that we made of the strategy to show what the suburb of Belmore was going to look like: between four to 25 storeys, every house, every street. National Trust conservation areas; war service home areas. That is what we have stopped in the last four years. If the metro goes through, that is what will have to happen to create the patronage. At the moment, the T3 line is under-patronaged. It is not crowded. They need to make it crowded to make the metro profitable. That is what we will get. I would like to table that.

The CHAIR: Yes, if you could just hand those over.

Ms COOREY: And that is what Lakemba will look like. Lakemba will be changed forever. Elizabeth Farrelly did an article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* about the priority precincts. She said Lakemba, Campsie and Belmore will be changed forever and totally unrecognisable. They will be mini Hong Kong suburbs, and that is what the metro is all about. Let's not make any bones about that. I would like to table that as well. I was going to bring the physical model, but I did not think the Committee would allow me to bring it in.

The CHAIR: No, it would be very difficult to table.

Ms COOREY: Also, in relation to—

The CHAIR: Let me stop you there.

Ms COOREY: Sorry, yes. I will stop talking.

The CHAIR: We will go to questions and hopefully the rest of the information can come out during the questions. The Hon. Wes Fang looks like he is bursting out of his seat.

The Hon. WES FANG: I have got quite a number of questions, actually. I am going to start—and it is probably predictable and the Hon. Anthony D'Adam will no doubt raise some point. Can you talk to me about Keep Our Area Suburban—the group?

Ms COOREY: I thought you would ask that question. Thank you so much, Mr Fang. What would you like to know? We were formed four years ago against the overdevelopment in the area. We have had a number of meetings. We have organised two public rallies of over 700 people at the Orion Centre. We have worked in conjunction with the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, where we have had, I think, 300 or 400 people at the Herb Greedy Hall at Marrickville. We have organised a transport forum at the Lebanese Muslim Association headquarters in Wangee Road in February this year. I had over 40 members attend, including the former secretary of the New South Wales transport, Mr Kevin Moss. I had Mr Jihad Dib attend. I had Ms Sophie Cotsis attend. Is there anything else you need to know?

The Hon. WES FANG: I am just wondering about the leadership, the membership of the executive, the rules with which you operate, how you develop policy and the like.

Ms COOREY: We are a loosely formed organisation of very desperate residents to keep our area from being demolished. We meet sporadically but we have had a lot of success and we are recognised by government departments. We have had meetings with Ministers. We have had meetings with the Opposition. We have had meetings with the Opposition leaders and deputy Opposition leaders. We go to all the public forums in relation to this particular issue. We have attempted to get a meeting with the Premier. We have attempted to get a meeting with Rodd Staples. In fact, I sent an email to Rodd Staples in my own capacity on 8 July. I am happy to read the email out to you and table it.

The Hon. WES FANG: No, thank you. Tabling will be fine.

Ms COOREY: Thank you so much. I can give you a copy of that email.

The Hon. WES FANG: Thank you for that. That is very illuminating. Can you tell me some more about the Belmore Shopkeepers Association?

Ms COOREY: Yes. The Belmore Shopkeepers Association—I have been attending all their meetings because, you see, I used to be the ward councillor. I have a very big interest in Canterbury, Campsie, Belmore, Lakemba, Wiley Park and Punchbowl, and in Earlwood, Ashbury, Croydon Park and Beverly Hills and Kingsgrove and Narwee and Riverwood. I represented that area for eight years as an Independent—all those areas.

The Hon. WES FANG: Is the person who is the secretary for Belmore Shopkeepers Association the same as Keep Our Area Suburban?

Ms COOREY: No.

The Hon. WES FANG: If I take you to submission number 81, you will note that on submission number 81 there is a covering letter.

Ms COOREY: Which is submission 81? Whose is it?

The Hon. WES FANG: Sorry, I keep everything digital because I do not like wasting paper.

The CHAIR: That is Keep Our Area Suburban.

Ms COOREY: Yes, I have got it here.

The Hon. WES FANG: This is the covering letter for Keep Our Area Suburban.

Ms COOREY: Yes.

The Hon. WES FANG: It is dated 12 October 2019.

Ms COOREY: Correct, yes.

The Hon. WES FANG: This is the letter that was tabled by Ms Abigail Boyd earlier today from the Belmore Shopkeepers Association. The fonts, their layout—everything is almost exactly identical.

The CHAIR: Did they use Word?

Ms COOREY: What are you alleging, sorry, Mr Fang? It is a different address and we are a different organisation.

The Hon. WES FANG: It just struck me as interesting that the layout—

The CHAIR: It looks like Calibri, the standard template font. Is there a question here, Mr Fang?

The Hon. WES FANG: No, I am just thinking—

Ms COOREY: Was there an allegation, Mr Fang?

The Hon. WES FANG: No, there is no allegation.

Ms COOREY: Would you like the metadata of my computer? What would you like, Mr Fang?

The Hon. WES FANG: It is remarkably coincidental. I am just seeking if there are any links between the two organisations.

Ms COOREY: We do support each other, but the persons that signed the association are shopkeepers. I am quite happy to make a recommendation to the shopkeepers association that you attend on the next occasion and you can ask them these very questions if you like, if you would like to attend, Mr Fang, at Belmore bowling club.

The Hon. WES FANG: No, I was just—

Ms COOREY: I am not sure which electorate you represent as an upper House MP.

The Hon. WES FANG: I represent all of them.

Ms COOREY: Good on you. We would love to have you on the next occasion to support our cause.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Guest speaker.

Ms COOREY: Yes, we will have you as a guest speaker. Thank you.

The Hon. WES FANG: So is there no link between the Belmore Shopkeepers Association and Keep Our Area Suburban?

Ms COOREY: We support each other like we support the Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, Hurlstone Park Association [HPA], Save Dully, Save Marrickville and the Canterbury residents action group against the development of the racecourse. We have a lot of problems in our area from development. We are being targeted, Mr Fang, as a result of a corrupt council.

The Hon. WES FANG: Again, it is outside the terms of reference.

Ms COOREY: It could be under "other"; it is corrupt.

The Hon. WES FANG: Can you talk to me about the membership of Belmore Shopkeepers Association?

Ms COOREY: No, I cannot talk to you about the membership. I do not have that. Those persons themselves—Mr Fang, the Belmore Shopkeepers Association has its points of view and we wholeheartedly support it.

The Hon. WES FANG: It is just interesting that Ms Abigail Boyd indicated that you had brought this letter in and given it to her—

Ms COOREY: Correct, I had given her a copy.

The Hon. WES FANG: —and had direct contact with her about this.

Ms COOREY: She is the Chairperson.

The CHAIR: I also use Calibri.

Ms COOREY: It is very concerned about the construction effects that are going to occur.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: In all seriousness, Ms Coorey—I acknowledge your passion about these issues—

Ms COOREY: Thank you, Mr Mallard.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: —and see you have been a formidable councillor.

Ms COOREY: With a lot of death threats.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I will not comment on that but I can imagine you probably ruffled feathers.

Ms COOREY: And still continuing death threats.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: You have made allegations around corruption.

Ms COOREY: Yes.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: They are referencing the previous council.

Ms COOREY: Absolutely.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: It is our obligation as public officials that you have raised this with us in a forum that you have taken all of this to the appropriate authorities—to the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] or—

Ms COOREY: I am not prepared to comment on that, Mr Mallard, for certain reasons.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I would advise you as a member of Parliament because we are obliged to when people raise things.

Ms COOREY: I understand, but I am not a public official.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: I would advise you to take that to the appropriate authorities but we are not the appropriate authority.

Ms COOREY: No. I understand. But I thought that as members of this Committee, you ought to be made aware of my concerns.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Yes, I am making an observation, as we are obliged to as members of Parliament that you take it to the correct authority, which is the ICAC.

The CHAIR: Can we share the questions around? I will go to the Opposition.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Ms Coorey, could you perhaps elaborate on some of the safety concerns that you have in relation to the operation of the metro?

Ms COOREY: Yes. In relation to the safety concerns, I have that on page 11 of the supplementary submission. I will make some submissions on that. What we are going to get from Sydenham to Bankstown is something completely different to the northwest Metro. We are going to get a 2.4-metre-high mesh fence on both sides that is unheard of in this country. It will be like a compound for the commuter.

The CHAIR: Sorry, where are those fences?

Ms COOREY: On both sides from Sydenham to Bankstown, a 2.4-metre-high mesh fence going all the way through—

The CHAIR: Along the whole corridor.

Ms COOREY: —which will totally destroy the environment and the biodiversity of the area and dislocate whole communities. Such fencing indicates a level of security that does not exist on the northwest metro. Also, in relation to persons standing up for long distances, we now have the statistics from the Hong Kong police, thanks to Mr Roydon Ng, in relation to the offences that are being committed on these metros at the moment in Hong Kong. Obviously, it does not include the statistics on the criminal offences that are being committed as a result of the riots. The most serious offences, which is what I have been predicting, are the sexual assault offences and pickpocketing from the crowding nature of these metros. Also, in *The Telegraph* on 10 August this year, it was noted that the sexual assault offences on the T3 line had increased by 60 per cent in the past 12 months.

The unions have been calling for more staff and express services to alleviate the problem. Guess what is going to happen to us, ladies and gentlemen of the Committee? We will have no staff on there. All our express services will be removed from Sydenham to Bankstown. Our women are literally going to be sitting ducks on that train because of what is going to happen. Also, a very concerning component of this train that the Government has rolled out on the northwest metro is that there is no separate cabin for the train driver, if you notice. If a would-be terrorist or a would-be maniac takes control of that train underground or above ground, brakes the console open, I do not want to know what is going to happen to those poor commuters. There are going to be no train drivers and no conductors. I noticed that some of the trains broke down on the northwest component, the train

driver hopped on. He was being watched within half a metre of commuters. That commuter could have had a gun or a knife.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: These trains are all over the world, though, and that issue has not happened.

Ms COOREY: Sorry, Mr Mallard, please let me continue. This is the concern I have. These are very long trips. We are not talking about short trips; we are talking about long distances. The single cabin metro is not suitable to our commuter train line system in this city. It is the wrong move. I will be proven right on this. For short distances there are no problems, but for long commuter park-and-ride train services, it is going to be a huge problem.

The CHAIR: That is an interesting point. You are saying that—

Ms COOREY: There is no cabin for the driver, so if the train breaks down—

The CHAIR: In other places where metro is used for short trips, you are saying that there have been concerns over safety but at least they are stopping regularly in case of there being something.

Ms COOREY: Correct, they are short distances.

The CHAIR: What you are saying is that when you have stations that are, say, five kilometres apart, then that is a different consideration.

Ms COOREY: Correct. With the Hong Kong model—the rail and property model—the towers are enormous so people do not have to travel long distances standing up. There are not a lot of safety concerns. Theoretically we are talking about someone travelling all the way from Tallawong to Bankstown with no train driver or conductor. We are also talking about the tunnels being 0.8 metres wide on each side. They are very narrow tunnels. This point has been made very well by a gentleman John Maconochie on 7 May 2018. I have got the article in here for you to read. He calls them the death traps of the New South Wales metro tunnels. We understand that the width of the tunnels between Sydney to Chatswood is done to specification and is the same for the northwest component.

We have no information as to what actions will be put into place to create the safety barriers between the Southwest Metro, commuter line and the goods line that runs between Canterbury and Belmore to prevent crashes occurring. We have a heavy railway line. Members of the committee, you should be concerned about our commuters and a commuter metro running alongside the heavy goods rail line crashing. There are no crash barriers. We have not even been told if they are going to put any safety crash barriers in there. Also, we now have the information on the 40 incidents of safety and maintenance recorded for the northwest Metro since May 2019. Those incidents concern me because we are talking about gap fillers.

We are very grateful to Mr Staples and his friends for not demolishing heritage station buildings that have been there since 1896. What we are concerned about are the gap fillers that are now being proposed to be used on these stations that are curved. In relation to journey times, Mr Staples and his people are saying that the journey times will remain the same. It is impossible to have the same journey time with the gap filler. The gap filler needs to come out, there needs to be synchronisation with the train as it pulls in, and then the gap filler has to go back in before the train pulls out, otherwise the carriage will be damaged. On the metro page it still says—

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Point of order—

Ms COOREY: —that it is going to take 28 minutes to get from Bankstown to Central on the new metro. That was from 2017. They still maintain it is 28 minutes. It cannot be 28 minutes. It should be something more like 35 minutes, which means we are going to be worse off with the metro compared with the heavy rail. These persons who turned up here today have read very little about the practicalities of the metro and the technical part of the metro. There are more interested in the development. They talked about the University of Western Sydney coming to Bankstown. Yes, it is coming to Bankstown alright. But Canterbury-Bankstown council is giving free land to the University of Western Sydney worth \$65 million—

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Councils are falling over themselves to get universities.

Ms COOREY: —to build 27 stories in the middle of Bankstown with very little car parking. How is the Minister going to sign off on that?

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Point of order: I draw your attention to the time.

The CHAIR: I do hate to interrupt you. We are past time. I will give the Opposition and the Government one last chance to ask a question, if there is anything they have got.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: No, we waive that privilege.

The Hon. WES FANG: No.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: I think we are okay.

The CHAIR: I am very sorry we have run out of time. I was fascinated.

Ms COOREY: No, that is okay. I could have gone on for hours.

The CHAIR: Yes, I know.

Ms COOREY: We have researched it for four or five years.

The CHAIR: You have given us a lot to think about and a lot of information. Thank you very much for your time. I do not think you took any questions on notice.

Ms COOREY: No.

The CHAIR: You do not need to worry about that. Thank you very much for your time.

Ms COOREY: If there are any questions about the submission, I am happy to take the questions on notice. If you need any points of clarification, I will leave my mobile and my email. I am happy to talk to you but there are some very interesting documents in there that have never been tabled in the city regarding the metro. I think people need to read it and come to terms with it. I thank you for your time today and I commend you for this Committee. Thank you.

The CHAIR: Thank you.

(The witness withdrew.)

The Committee adjourned at 16:34.