



16 November 2017

Industry Engagement Team  
Sydney Metro West,  
PO Box K659  
Haymarket NSW 1240

*Submitted Electronically*

Dear Sir/Madam,

We write on behalf of the Sydney Business Chamber (SBC) and the Committee for Sydney (CfS) to comment on the proposal for Sydney Metro West.

The Sydney Business Chamber is a division of the NSW Business Chamber and represents over 150 of Sydney's leading corporations across diverse sectors. SBC advocates for Sydney to be a competitive and sustainable global city. SBC strives to identify, develop and promote the major issues that contribute to economic activity and growth in Australia's only global city, Sydney.

The Committee for Sydney is an independent think tank and champion for the whole of Sydney, providing thought leadership beyond the electoral cycle. The Committee aims to enhance the economic, social, cultural and environmental conditions that make Sydney a competitive, resilient and liveable global city. The Committee has a diverse membership with over 150 member organisations: including the major corporate sectors driving Sydney's economy; strategically minded local authorities; key NSW Government departments and agencies; not-for-profit organisations; and leading arts and sporting institutions. Members help develop and deliver priorities, provide expertise and ensure a representative geographical spread across the greater Sydney region.

As organisations that advocate for additional public transport infrastructure in Sydney, the SBC and CfS support strongly the proposed Sydney Metro West. With the Government having already recognised that the T1 Western line will reach capacity by 2030<sup>1</sup>, the case for developing Sydney Metro West to help meet transport capacity demands between Parramatta and Sydney is easily made. Indeed, Infrastructure Australia has designated this project as a High Priority Initiative<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/sydneys-western-rail-line-packed-to-full-capacity-within-15-years-20160907-gras2o.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/policy-publications/publications/files/Australian-Infrastructure-Plan-2017.pdf>

Beyond addressing these capacity demands however, the Sydney Metro West project has the potential to effectively re-shape Sydney by supporting the Greater Sydney Commission's three distinctive Western, Central and Eastern cities concept<sup>3</sup>. Into the future, it should be seen as an avenue to provide critical transport linkages to the proposed aerotropolis, centred at the new Western Sydney Airport (WSA) in Badgerys Creek.

The recognition of and development of the three cities is a vital element in the shaping of global Sydney. Despite actual and projected jobs growth in Western Sydney, a substantial jobs deficit for the region remains; providing a fast link between the Parramatta and Sydney CBDs would allow for the agglomeration of the two economies, and further elevate the status of Parramatta as complementary to the Sydney CBD.

We note that as increasingly more government agencies and corporate offices relocate, Parramatta represents a significant opportunity to grow as Sydney's administrative CBD and to see the creation of more knowledge jobs in the region. With limitations for floor space in the Sydney CBD and natural limitations on east-west infrastructure, the development of Sydney Metro West has the clear potential to not only provide a modern and efficient transport link, but also the vital economic spine to support Global Sydney's future growth.

### ***Connecting the two CBD's***

In 2016, the SBC commissioned research with Parramatta City Council that identified potential route alignments for a fast rail service from Parramatta to the Sydney CBD that would deliver a journey time of 15 minutes. Both CfS and SBC believe that delivering a project that achieves similar journey times between the two CBDs would provide significant agglomeration effects that could not be achieved if a longer journey time was pursued.

While both organisations are aware of recent media reports regarding four potential route options for Sydney Metro West:

- An express connection (15 minutes / 5 Stations)
- A rapid connection (20 minutes/ 10 stations)
- Local North (25 minutes / 12 stations)
- South (25 minutes/ 12 stations)

We are not aware whether formal consideration has been given to the feasibility of delivering a hybrid of these options (for example, delivering both an express and rapid connection through tunnel duplication). Such an approach should be considered as it would simultaneously maximise both the agglomeration opportunities of connecting the CBD's, while providing significant urban renewal and value uplift along the route through the development of new stations and associated property development. However, in the absence of this consideration, our preferred option is for an express connection of 15 minutes.

### ***A new economic corridor***

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.greater.sydney/three-cities>

While Sydney Metro West provides an important additional connection between Western Sydney and the Sydney CBD, the project also provides a significant opportunity to provide better transport links from locations between the two CBDs.

Proposed station locations at the Bays Precinct<sup>4</sup> and Sydney Olympic Park (SOP) are supported strongly as the growth potential of these areas is hampered significantly by their current lack of public transport accessibility. In the absence of efficient public transport the capacity to attract large-scale employers to locate to the centres is greatly diminished. The recent decision of the Commonwealth Bank to relocate away from SOP is a case in point.

Sydney Metro West should be seen in the context of urban renewal and the densification of housing along the corridor. Viewing, planning and promoting Sydney Metro West as a transport, economic and city-shaping corridor will ensure the benefits of the project will be maximised by driving new investment, creating additional housing and, critically, more employment opportunities along the corridor.

Every station must be designed with the principles recently enunciated by Sydney Metro as integrated station developments incorporating; iconic buildings, vibrant and public places, be integrated and inclusive, be designed for the future and be safe and accessible.

While both SBC and CfS are supportive of the Bays Precinct and SOP as station locations, with a range of route alignments currently being considered we do not see it as our role to provide a comment on the possible station sites. Having set the principles that we see as important, particularly around the express option we are agnostic on the other stations.

Although there is little doubt that further station locations will be identified once a route is determined, consideration should be given to the potential for a staged development of stations. By this we refer to the potential creation of additional station boxes for future stops along the route over time. As we noted at the outset of this submission, while a rapid connection between the Sydney and Parramatta CBDs is essential to providing agglomeration effects, relieve congestion and to address critical job shortages, over a 40-50 year time horizon, as the economic weight and population of Sydney moves further west, the ability to adapt the route by adding in additional stops over time becomes more attractive.

When viewed over the longer term, it becomes clear that beyond some key hub stations, the true potential of Sydney Metro West can only be realised if its route is aligned to maximise economic opportunity over the medium to longer term.

It would be a significant missed opportunity if the corridor was based on pre-determined station locations, without looking at the corridor holistically and how it can best contribute to Sydney's long term growth aspirations. Investing to adapt the corridor over time, through the development of additional station boxes would be a sensible approach and allow for a 'longer burn' uplift from Sydney Metro West.

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<sup>4</sup> However, any station and other development at the Bays Precinct will need to co-exist with port operations at this site in line with the recent review by Infrastructure NSW.

## ***Extending the Sydney Metro West from Parramatta to Westmead***

Despite poor levels of transport connectivity, Westmead has grown from a former dusty showground to supporting the largest concentration of health, education and research facilities in Australia. A very strong case exists to build on the opportunities such a significant agglomeration of talent and investment provides by extending Sydney West Metro past Parramatta to Westmead.

The Westmead Alliance (of which SBC is a member) commissioned Deloitte Access Economics to examine the economic contribution made by the Westmead precinct and recommend actions to further grow this contribution. The report found that Westmead currently provides over 18,000 specialised high value jobs and holds the opportunity to become Western Sydney's true economic and innovation powerhouse by potentially delivering 50,000 knowledge jobs by 2036. In order to realise this opportunity, the report acknowledged that *"a range of barriers to investment must be removed. Most notably, transport access, parking and urban amenity must be addressed to make Westmead an easier place to get to, along with a highly attractive place to live, study and work."*<sup>5</sup> The Sydney West Metro could help address these barriers, and provide the important link between Westmead and both the Sydney and Parramatta CBDs.

## ***Connection to Western Sydney Airport***

In 2015, the SBC commissioned renowned US academic Dr John Kasarda to prepare a report on the potential for a Western Sydney aerotropolis, a metropolitan sub-region with its infrastructure, land use and economy, centred at the new Western Sydney Airport (WSA) at Badgerys Creek.<sup>6</sup> Dr Kasarda found that for an aerotropolis to develop at WSA it must have fast connections to Parramatta, the Sydney CBD and other metropolitan nodes of Western Sydney. By making these connections, the potential passenger catchment area of WSA would increase exponentially and enable it to grow, properly service Sydney's aviation needs, and attract greater levels of private sector investment into the aerotropolis.

At present, there remains no plans for an efficient rail connection from WSA to Parramatta and Sydney CBDs. The extension of the South West Rail Line to WSA will provide good connectivity for Liverpool and surrounds – which is important – but it will not deliver proper connectivity, at speed, to either CBD. Sydney Metro West provides an opportunity to deliver this fast rail connection. Quite clearly, an extension to WSA needs to be part of planning for Sydney Metro West, even if it is not delivered in its first stage.

## ***Timing of delivery***

The Government has indicated that the project will be operational in the second half of the mid-2020s. Infrastructure Australia concluded that the Sydney Metro West should be developed between 2022 and 2027.<sup>7</sup> The SBC and CfS recommend

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<sup>5</sup> Deloitte Access Economics (2016) [Westmead Innovation District: Building Western Sydney's jobs engine - Strategic Vision 2016-2036](#)

<sup>6</sup> Kasarda, John (2015) [A Western Sydney Aerotropolis: Maximising the benefits of Badgerys Creek](#)

<sup>7</sup> Infrastructure Australia (2017) [Infrastructure Priority List: Australian Infrastructure Plan Project and Initiative Summaries](#), p. 42.

that given the urgent need for additional public transport capacity, additional housing supply, and enhanced connections to economic hubs along the corridor, the first stage of the project should be operational no later than 2025.

### ***Delivery Model and Funding***

Sydney West Metro provides a prime opportunity to redesign the traditional delivery and funding model.

While value capture is not a silver bullet to funding infrastructure projects, it should make a contribution where appropriate. The SBC and CfS note the recent announcement of 70,000 new homes in Parramatta Growth Priority Precinct and the corresponding levy to be placed on these new dwellings to help fund the Parramatta Light Rail and other supporting infrastructure. The SBC and CfS support the principle behind a similar mechanism being used elsewhere along the Sydney West Metro corridor to contribute funding for the project, but any such mechanism should also be applied to existing dwellings as well. The mechanism also needs to be considered in the context of existing levies from local councils, and should be designed accordingly.

There is also opportunity to consider how best to deliver the station development. For example, the Melbourne Metro project devised a public private partnership to deliver stations and the commercial and residential development above the station. This ensured a less fragmented approach and has enabled the stations to be considered more as places and precincts which will benefit commuters, residents, businesses and the city at large.

### ***Governance***

Governance of major projects is always challenging, but SBC and CfS express the importance of coordination in terms of consultation, design, and delivery. Strong, open and early engagement between relevant government agencies, local governments, land owners, business and the community is vital to ensure a holistic approach to the project to ensure it maximises and delivers the economic and social benefits. It is important that the Sydney Metro West project is governed and delivered as not only a transport project but also as a city-shaping project. An authority similar to the Melbourne Metro Rail Authority responsible for planning site investigations, stakeholder engagement, planning approvals and procurement, construction delivery and project commissioning may be appropriate in this regard. The Authority would also need to interface effectively with other key agencies such as the GSC, TfNSW, Planning and Infrastructure NSW.

### ***Station design***

In order to take full advantage of the opportunities for connectivity that the Sydney Metro West will provide, all stations should be designed as transport interchanges with other forms of public transport including light rail, bus, heavy rail and other metro lines. Metro stations should also be mixed use developments offering both residential and commercial development opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Sydney West Metro project. If you have any further questions please contact Robert Millar on 9458 7359 or [Robert.Millar@nswbc.com.au](mailto:Robert.Millar@nswbc.com.au).

Yours Sincerely,



**The Hon. Patricia Forsythe**  
Executive Director  
**Sydney Business Chamber**



**Dr Tim Williams**  
Chief Executive Officer  
**Committee for Sydney**



**Mr David Borger**  
Director  
**Sydney Business Chamber, Western  
Sydney**