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Submission on Sydney Metro West EIS (SSI-10038) by Mr Nathan English

Author's Position: *Support for the Project* (albeit with some suggested changes for maximum value return).

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Sydney Metro West EIS.

I would like to think that at this point in your project's evolution, change can still be sought and that is why this period of exhibition has been set up. There is a recent history of mega projects in this state that have seen little change occur to their initial EISs before being approved – no matter how many people ask for them to be changed.

I largely support the 'city shaping' imperatives for the Metro West concept. I like that it is a major investment in additional rail infrastructure, which offers an alternative to private toll roads to speed up people's commutes between two key centres. public transport however I have a number of suggestions which I think would make a big difference to the success of the outcome. Given the amount of money this project will cost, I believe those suggestions should be considered and more thought put towards the finer details of this EIS. In this regard, I wish to comment on five (5) key areas.

1. Best possible integration with the rest of the network;
2. Active / Public Transport connectivity;
3. Consideration for additional stations;
4. Reconsideration for the width of tunnels; and
5. Consideration of different rolling stock.

Best possible integration with the rest of the network:

The new Sydney Metro West must work to connect and integrate with the rest of the transport network between Westmead and the Bays – if not beyond. Rather than serve as simply another radial line rail line servicing Sydney CBD or indeed Parramatta CBD, it needs to act as a multimodal interchange corridor at each of its planned stations, especially at The Bays, which should not just be a destination – but a rallying and transfer point for those living around it, in the Inner West, Pyrmont and Balmain who wish to travel east-west.

In this regard, I strongly encourage Transport for NSW to follow-through on the 'initiative for investigation' discussed not only in Future Transport 2056, but also the Eastern City District Plan and the State Infrastructure Strategy from INSW (2018) which all suggest the potential for an extension of the Inner West Light Rail service into The Bays Precinct, running somewhere between Lilyfield and Pyrmont, most

likely via White Bay and the Anzac Bridge. This alone would allow interchange for most of the Inner West light rail catchment users to transfer almost seamlessly with the future Bays Precinct Metro Station.

I also believe (despite the fact it may be out of scope for this particular EIS), that the longer term planning for the Metro West should look to see it cross under Cockle Bay or Wynyard, take over the Eastern Suburbs Line from Martin Place onwards (allowing the Illawarra Line to one day be extended to the Northern Beaches via the eastern side of the Harbour Bridge. This means the Metro West could then be extended into the Eastern Suburbs, southbound from Bondi Junction to run a long loop service perhaps interchanging with key points like Bondi, Coogee, Maroubra, Malabar, Little Bay, Port Botany, Banksmeadow, Eastgardens, UNSW, Zetland, Waterloo and University of Sydney (Camperdown / Broadway), Glebe / Blackwattle Bay, before heading back out west again.

Active / Public Transport connectivity

Transport for NSW should also be seeking to encourage good radial coverage and connections feeding into each station for active transport, this should include:

- At least 1km radials for pedestrians, and
- Up to 5km radials for cyclists and E-scooters.

Stations should also be fed by high-frequency cross regional, north-south bus or (better still), light rail services. These should be direct routes which transfer passengers from the surrounding regions either side of Parramatta Road to ensure a high-demand catchment for each station that allows more central and eastern Sydney commuters can benefit from travelling east-west in a faster fashion.

The new Metro West really needs to serve all people's needs, especially those who are likely to be vulnerable users, ie. the elderly, mothers with young children, women travelling alone. It needs to feel safe, it needs to be safe.

The stations also need a very large number of cycling lock-ups or bicycle hubs to encourage cyclists (of all confidence levels) to leave their cars at home and ride in for the last few miles to their station. This will also require safe and hygienic end-of-trip facilities for those stations planned as serving future business centres.

The Metro West needs to create new people places, to invoke workable precincts which people want to visit and stay in.

Consideration for additional stations:

The Bays: - Station should arguably be looking to service both the Balmain Peninsula and west Pyrmont. The former could be linked via a relatively fast pedestrian and cycling linkage from Gladstone Park, which is in central Balmain. It could also become the station that services Rozelle Bay foreshore, if short pedestrian tunnel were punched through beneath the CityWest Link, about 50-100m west of the ANZAC soldiers. The latter (west Pyrmont), could be linked via the Glebe Island Bridge. This would reduce the need to invest in a Pyrmont Station altogether, so long as you really streamline your active feeders into White Bay, to ensure they allow you to 'sweat the future station asset' you're already committed to building there.

In this regard, think about re-developing the sides of the approaching abutments for the old Glebe Island bridge into new shop-top development rows. These could help 'stitch together' both the east and west sides of The Bays, making the bridge a new place people want to visit out of interest, and not just a through-way. Light rail could elegantly service this new 'high street of The Bays', again, linking Pyrmont-Ultimo with the Metro West at White Bay, I would suggest running this down Harris Street to link with UTS and Central, if not over the Pyrmont Bridge to King Street.

Lilyfield: - North of the CityWest Link could really benefit and be given new life if an additional station were placed there. My suggestion would be to build one close to the ridgeline of Balmain Road, near the western end of Callan Park – not far from Orange Grove Public School and the University of Tasmania's Faculty of Medicine. An ideal location may be the under-utilised local centre near the junction of Wharf Road and Balmain Road. This location could easily be linked to light rail stops at North Leichhardt or Lilyfield (Catherine Street), perhaps via some new underground pedestrian tunnels. That way, people transferring between services wouldn't need to engage with surface traffic along the CityWest Link and Balmain Road.

Serious consideration could be given to separated cycling connections to link a new station here to surrounding areas. That way, it would arguably be able to offer efficient east-west connectivity to residents in Leichhardt, Haberfield and possibly even Rodd Point.

In the latter case, a new active bridge could be built linking Rodd Point Park with Leichhardt Park, to provide a far more direct connection that is largely car-free, from the other side of Iron Cove.

All such connections would help to grow the catchment for Lilyfield's Station and promote cross-regional cycling.

Silverwater: - Somewhere between Day Street and Silverwater Road. This is important to service the established residential areas at Newington, west of Sydney Olympic Park. It could also service workers to the industrial areas of Silverwater and be fed by north-south connectors from the surrounding regions using Silverwater Road as their conduit. Future residential development opportunities could also be an option here as part of GPOP expansion.

Camellia: - This area is known to be a future development zone – and if you're no longer connecting Rydalmere (which would have been a good transfer point for the eastern branch of the new Parramatta light rail), you should really be looking to reserve a station cavity for Camellia, so that in future you can give it the 'leg-up' it deserves.

Investing in this now, could be just as important as the heavy rail stations were at Green Square and Mascot as far as proving a catalyst for urban transformation is concerned – essentially offering a 'midtown' for GPOP.

Reconsideration for the width of tunnels

Please use TBMs which bore tunnels wide enough to accommodate Sydney's double-decker trains safely. In this regard, if we ever want to, we can increase capacity by offering a double-deck carriage to the driverless metro system.

There is truly no logical reason why single-deck metros should be seen as the *only* train carriages capable of running *driverless*. Passengers travelling further distances than Sydney CBD to Westmead, may like to have a proper seat and even a table to sit their laptop on – and this comes with productivity dividends.

Consideration of different rolling stock

The type of rolling stock we adopt should broker a new standard for Sydney Metro. They should be lighter in weight, faster and provide more seating than the previous carriages used on Sydney Metro NorthWest. That first generation of carriages are mostly standing room during crush-hour conditions, and have no way of providing comfort for the long-distance commuter to work on a laptop or to rest comfortably after a hard day at work. There are also no luggage racks for those who may be looking to transfer to the airports with baggage.

The double-deck services we already have in the Sydney Trains network were an Australian first – and I think we should be taking pride in this invention of the double deck train and looking to integrate it into the Metro West service given the wide geographic expanse of Sydney's footprint – which will always result in long commutes for some. I see no reason why we couldn't - and if the argument of people alighting from the train being too slow is used, then that is simple to overcome with announcements well ahead of the station asking people to make their way to the exiting areas – it's not rocket science.

If we must have single-deck stock, it should be more like Brisbane's, which provides far more comfort and seating. Right now, Sydney light rail offers more seating the Metro carriages – and that's just not good enough given the length of the commutes your expecting people to endure, sometimes standing.

Declaration:

I have not made any reportable political donations in the previous two years.

Summary

Thank you for the ability to comment on this EIS. I hope my suggestions have given your planners something to think about, and that the project becomes a major success for all who live in Sydney.

Sincerely,



Nathan English

Urban Planner / Resident of Balmain East /
MPlan, GradCert (Jour), BComms / Media