

23 June 2020

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
4 Parramatta Square
Parramatta NSW 2050

Re: Sydney Metro West Stage 1 Environmental Impact Statement Submission

The Western Sydney Business Chamber is pleased to write in support of the Sydney Metro West.

The Chamber is a not-for-profit business organisation representing more than 115 of the region's largest business, community and government organisations. Our mission is to advocate for investment and policies that will encourage the growth of employment in Western Sydney and make the region a better place to live, work and play.

The Chamber has been a vocal advocate of the Sydney Metro West project since the announcement in 2016. We welcome this important milestone in the life of the project and the opportunity to contribute to the most optimal design of the Sydney Metro West to the communities of Western Sydney. Improving public transport connections between the Sydney CBD, Parramatta, and other key centres in Western Sydney is a priority issue for our members and it will drive greater private sector investment in the region.

The Chamber recognises that the increasing demand for public transport, particularly on the T1 Western Line, will likely exceed capacity on the rail network by the early 2030s on current growth trends. Sydney Metro West will provide additional rail capacity between the Eastern Harbour City and the Central River City as well as reducing the commuting time between the two city centres encouraging greater investment and growth in Parramatta as a result.

The Chamber notes that Sydney Metro West will support 10,000 direct and 70,000 indirect jobs during construction based on the analysis by Sydney Metro. This project comes at a crucial time when the NSW economy has entered a COVID-19 induced recession, and public sector investment in essential infrastructure will be vital to creating jobs and re-energising the economy in the months and years to come.

Future Connection to Western Sydney Airport

The Chamber has been a champion of the Western Sydney Airport as a game-changer for job creation in the region. We believe that fast connectivity between Parramatta and Sydney CBDs will be critical to long term success of the Airport and the Aerotropolis.

A report, commissioned by the Western Sydney Business Chamber by renown Aerotropolis expert Dr John Kasarda, Director of the Centre for Air Commerce at UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School, emphasised the need for fast connectivity to the new Airport.

Dr Kasarda argues in the report that:

"Fast and efficient metropolitan-wide access must be developed between WSA and Sydney and other major urban/employment centres in the broader metropolitan region that reduces airport access time to no more than 45 minutes to and from these nodes, even in peak traffic periods. Plans should move forward with associated funding to provide express rail service and express motorway

infrastructure from WSA to the Sydney CBD, KSA, and other urban centres in the greater Sydney region.”¹

The Western Sydney Business Chamber supports the future-proofing of Sydney Metro West and an extension from Westmead to the Western Sydney Airport as the next stage of the metro line. The intention to deliver a travel time of around 20 minutes between Parramatta and the Sydney CBD would position Sydney Metro West to deliver the connectivity under 45 minutes as outlined by Dr Kasarda if a similar travel time between Westmead and Western Sydney Airport can be achieved in a future extension.

Clearer definition of the benefits of Sydney Metro West to Greater Western Sydney

The Chamber encourages Sydney Metro to provide further information of the benefits of the project to the T1 Western Line, between Penrith and Westmead. The Chamber understands that rail capacity on the T1 Western Line will be reached west of Parramatta around 2030. Commentary by Government and rail experts has indicated that “trains will be full” by the time they reach Parramatta in the coming decade and that has been used as justification for Sydney Metro West.

The construction of the Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport is likely to also add additional commuters to the T1 Western Line as passengers transfer between the two services to access the suburbs and centres to the east of St Marys by the end of 2026 when the line is anticipated to be in service to support the opening of the Airport. This will place further pressure on the capacity on the T1 Western Line.

The benefits of Sydney Metro West appear to be focused to the east of the Central City with no indication of capacity benefit to the T1 Western Line west of Parramatta/Westmead. Additional information about commuter transfers between the T1 Western Line and Sydney Metro West at Westmead would assist in demonstrating the benefits of the project to Greater Western Sydney. Further advice on the NSW Government’s intention to increase capacity on the T1 Western Line through increased services, signalling and track upgrades would be beneficial to understanding how capacity will be improved along the entire western corridor not just between Westmead and the Sydney CBD.

Westmead Health and Education Precinct

The Western Sydney Business Chamber has been a strong advocate of the opportunity to establish and support Westmead as a world-renown health, education and innovation precinct. A metro station at Westmead delivering more frequent and faster connections to the Sydney CBD will greatly enhance the opportunity to leverage on the significant public and private investment that has been made in the health, research and education facilities and other enterprises in the precinct.

The major stakeholders in the precinct encourage Sydney Metro to explore options to deliver the metro station earlier and consider what opportunities there may be to reduce the five and a half year timeframe for construction work at the station site. Under the proposed construction program, Westmead has the most prolonged construction period of all the Sydney Metro West sites. Given Westmead’s important role as a health, education and employment precinct streamlining this program would be beneficial to the precinct and the NSW Government’s goal of establishing it as a world-class centre of excellence in these sectors.

The Chamber encourages the investigation of further opportunities to improve the connectivity of the Westmead Precinct, including street design, walkability and cycling infrastructure. Potential connections that could be further explored include sub-terranean pedestrian and bicycle access from the Metro/Sydney Trains stations to both sides of Hawkesbury Road to the north of the heavy rail line. Consideration should

¹ Kasarda, J. (2015). [A Western Sydney Aerotropolis: Maximising the benefits of Badgerys Creek](#), p.28.

also be given to improved pedestrian and bicycle access from Alexandra Avenue under the heavy rail line into the Westmead Catholic Community and/or the Land and Housing Corporation site.

The Chamber also encourages the guidelines for placemaking around the Westmead station to include infrastructure that supports children and young adults to recognise the Westmead Children's Hospital, schools and universities in the precinct and the growing population of younger people who will be in the precinct in the years ahead.

Parramatta CBD

Sydney Metro has proposed to compulsorily acquire several lots around the Parramatta metro station site. The Chamber is advised that several landowners have put forward proposals to enable Sydney Metro to undertake its program using their sites at little to no cost to Sydney Metro while retaining their ownership of the sites. The Chamber understands that these proposals have been rejected in favour of compulsory acquisition. We believe this is an unnecessary process and that Sydney Metro should strongly reconsider working with landowners on a mutually beneficial agreement to provide these sites for the construction of the station while retaining their ownership.

The site of the metro station in Parramatta is a prominent location within Parramatta's growing CBD. The Chamber believes that it is most beneficial for the growth of the city that the amount of time that this large site remains an active construction site is minimised. We encourage Sydney Metro to investigate and support opportunities to begin construction of buildings above the station box as soon as possible. We believe avoiding the situation on the North West Metro where station sites were sterilised for eight years before the surrounding development can occur is paramount for Sydney's Central City.

The Parramatta metro station site will straddle almost an entire city block bounded by streets on three sides. The scale of the site and the length of the construction program necessitates to a consideration of what opportunities may be available to activate the streets on the edge of the construction site with pop up businesses. Sleeving temporary retail outlets around the periphery of the construction site should be considered to minimise the impact of the construction site in the city. Priority should be given to existing retail tenants in the construction site. Sydney Metro could additionally consider opportunities for temporary public art displays using the construction site hoardings.

There are several organisations that operate seven days a week located adjacent to the construction site for the Parramatta metro station. Access issues, noise, amenity for staff and clients are issues that Sydney Metro should work with stakeholders to provide alternative solutions and minimisation strategies.

Camellia

The Western Sydney Business Chamber and our membership are disappointed that the draft EIS indicates there will not be a metro station located between Parramatta and Sydney Olympic Park. The Chamber believes that this is a short-sighted decision that has the potential to hamper the expansion of Sydney's Central City of Parramatta.

The Chamber understands that an additional 200 metres of tunnelling would enable the realignment of the proposed Sydney Metro West tunnel from south of Rosehill Racecourse to the north through the proposed Camellia Town Centre.

The Western Sydney Business Chamber in partnership with Property Council of Australia (NSW), UDIA NSW, and Urban Taskforce have provided a separate submission supporting the case for Camellia to be included as an additional metro station on the Sydney Metro West.

We refer you to our detailed [Camellia submission](#) for further details on the case for why Camellia must have a metro station as part of Sydney Metro West.

Sydney Olympic Park

The Chamber applauds the inclusion of a metro station at Sydney Olympic Park. It will be a game-changer for the precinct providing significantly improved public transport connectivity to Parramatta and Sydney CBDs.

Sydney Olympic Park's economy has been struggling following the NSW Government's decision to encourage Commonwealth Bank to relocate to Redfern. This has deprived the Park of 5,000 workers in the Park for local businesses. The construction of Sydney Metro and the site being used for several years has the potential to temporarily reduce local employment further in the Park following the acquisition of several commercial offices. The minimisation of the construction program and the exploration of starting construction of buildings above the station box before the station is completed would assist in overcoming this challenge sooner.

Similar to our recommendations on the Parramatta metro station, we encourage Sydney Metro to work with the landowners in Sydney Olympic Park to provide the most optimal place-making strategy. We believe compulsory acquisition can be avoided and should be when the local landowners are willing to work with Sydney Metro on achieving the projects goals.

Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2

The Chamber has been a vocal advocate for Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 and its role in connecting the high-density communities of Melrose Park and Wentworth Point with the Sydney Metro West at Sydney Olympic Park. The Chamber encourages Sydney Metro to advocate that Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 be delivered in time to support the opening of Sydney Metro West.

Stakeholder Consultation

The Chamber recommends that consultation with stakeholders needs to be improved. A number of our Members who are large landholders in these precincts have indicated they have had no direct consultation in the design process to date. We encourage Sydney Metro to be more engaging in a two way dialogue on the issues and opportunities to streamline this project.

The Western Sydney Business Chamber appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Sydney Metro West EIS. If you require further information please feel free to contact Chris Taylor, Senior Manager Advocacy at chris.taylor@thechamber.com.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Borger', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Borger
Executive Director