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Submission on EIS for Metro West rail infrastructure, stations, precincts and operation

WalkSydney is a community group advocating for walkability in Greater Sydney (Wollongong to Newcastle, and the Coast to the Blue Mountains). We are a non-profit organisation, governed by a Committee. WalkSydney is calling for:

- *An urban environment in Sydney designed to encourage and support active transport – access to parks, playing fields and other recreational and cultural facilities*
- *Safer, slower streets, where the speed of motor vehicles is drastically reduced by legal, environmental, and physical measures to reduce the likelihood and consequences of collisions, including:*
 - *Safe streets to public transport stops and stations so people can reach longer distance destinations without needing a car*

A fuller statement is set out in Appendix 1.

WalkSydney welcomes this opportunity to respond to this Sydney Metro West EIS for rail infrastructure, stations, precincts and operations, with particular reference to the three station precincts in the Canada Bay municipality.

We share the same goals as Metro West in promoting active mobility in a wider, integrated and connected transport system, supporting 'movement and place' centre development.

The successful integration of Metro West station precincts with the existing urban centres will require significant modifications to local transport networks, to create safer and more walkable precincts. Overall, WalkSydney suggests:

- 10km/hr shared pedestrian/motor vehicle zones in the immediate vicinity of Metro stations
- 30km/hr speed zoning areas for surrounding precincts
- Additional pedestrian crossings, preferably signalised or 'wombats',
- Speed management devices to control the speed of motor vehicles, such as thresholds, speed cushions and line marking.
- Identifying opportunities to provide safe streets to schools (eg Five Dock Public School) and significant community recreational and cultural assets (eg Five Dock Park; Concord Oval)..

The worldwide movement to limit traffic speeds and improve pedestrian and cyclist safety is well established (<https://30please.org/>). Lower speed precincts are not only safer but improve amenity and liveability and support local commercial activity.

A critical factor in achieving Metro West's aspirations for successful station precincts, and extending similar benefits to surrounding neighbourhoods, will be effective inter-agency planning and delivery, across Metro West, TfNSW and other state agencies, and local councils.

Prioritising Pedestrian Access and Movement

WalkSydney notes that Metro West sets out in its Design Guidelines (Appendix E *Section 4.2.1 Interchange*)

Station planning and design is to acknowledge that Sydney Metro West forms part of an integrated transport network with a modal access hierarchy that prioritises pedestrian and bicycle access and movement as Priority 1.

This Metro West EIS fails to show in the forecast modal shares that pedestrian access is in fact prioritised, most notably over Park and Ride.

Further, this current EIS in Design Guideline sets out five (5) objectives and principles:

“Objective 2: Being part of a fully integrated transport system

Principle

Sydney Metro is a transit-oriented project that prioritises clear and legible connections with other public and active transport modes within the wider metropolitan travel network that intersect with this new spine.”

The Secretary’s Environmental Assessments Requirements as set out in Appendix A Table 2 (specific assessment requirements in addition to the general requirement above). In particular requirement 2 States:

2. (Assess) Operational transport impacts of the proposal, including:...

c. wider transport interactions (local and regional roads, cycling, public and freight transport);

Requirement 4 within the same table states:

Illustrate how movement (accessibility and connectivity) principles, outcomes and actions achieve:

a. balance between “place” and “movement”;

b. access for people walking, cycling and using public transport;

c. integration of proposal with wider active and public transport networks and access to public space, town centres and main town centres and main precincts of activity (currently existing or proposed in the plans and strategies of local councils and state authorities);

However, Metro West has not demonstrated in this EIS that it has met these requirements.

WalkSydney believes more work is required to meet the planning requirements as laid out in the EIS.

Five Dock

The high level of motor vehicle volumes along Great North Road, interacting with additional pedestrians accessing the Metro West station demands additional traffic management to existing and what is proposed in the EIS.

WalkSydney suggests a combination of measures to improve pedestrian safety and amenity:

- A 10km/hr shared zone to replace the current signalised crossing at Fred Kelly Reserve and extending down to, and along, Second Avenue (instead of the proposed signalised crossing at the intersection of Great North Road and Second Avenue)
- A 30km/hr speed limit implemented on Great North Road from the intersection of Queens Road/ Fairlight Street to Lyons Road/Lyons Road West.

Also, WalkSydney suggests that 10 km/h shared zones be established:

- At the the south end of East Street, immediately behind the Five Dock Station, and
- On Garfield Street west from Great North Rd to include the proposed kiss and ride point (connecting with Fred Kelly Reserve).

The City of Canada Bay forecasts a 43.9% increase in population in Five Dock - Canada Bay (to 2036) with a new town centre proposed on Great North Road across from the Metro Station. Given the significant density increase that has occurred and the population increase that is to occur in Five Dock, WalkSydney suggests that a wider zone of a 30km/hr area be implemented in a radius of approximately 500m of the Metro West precinct:

- In the west, to Scott St, taking in Five Dock Public School.
- In the east, to Park Rd and Five Dock Park
- In the south, to Queens Rd/Fairlight St.

North Strathfield

North Strathfield will also see very significant population growth, in line with the Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Transformation Strategy and the Canada Bay Homebush North Precinct Master Plan. The population in North Strathfield/ Strathfield is expected to increase by 84.8% and Concord West by 24.5% with significant high rise development.

This future development will require not only access to the Metro West/suburban railway stations but also good east-west connectivity across the rail corridor.

WalkSydney strongly supports a new shared pedestrian (and cyclist) crossing over or under the rail corridor as discussed in the EIS. The new crossing design need not follow the existing perpendicular alignment crossing but could be repositioned and realigned to accommodate future development on both sides of the rail corridor with easy grades between the North Strathfield and the Bakehouse Quarter to support the activation of the area in line with the City of Canada Bay Local Strategy Planning Statement and the Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Transformation Strategy (Section 10.3.1 of the EIS) and Strathfield Council's Powells Creek plans.

WalkSydney supports the Metro West statement in Section 10.3.1

“North Strathfield is identified within the Homebush Precinct. The vision of the Homebush Precinct is to transform the area into an ‘active and varied hub, blending higher density housing and a mix of different uses, supported by a network of green links and open spaces with walking access to four train stations.’

Sydney Metro West would support this vision, with the metro station increasing public transport accessibility and development opportunities in the area.”

Given the significant density increase that has occurred and the population increase that is to occur in North Strathfield under Canada Bay Council's Local Character Statements and Planning Studies for areas within 800m of Metro stations, WalkSydney suggests a the 30km/hr zoning area for all of the rezoned lands and 10km/h shared zones for streets that are adjacent to Metro West stations.

Also, the EIS mentions the importance of the Green Grid and notes Powell's Creek and Mason Park, but it fails to describe how active mobility infrastructure connects to these locations.

Burwood North

Given the significant population increase that is to occur in this part of Concord under Canada Bay Council's Local Character Statements and Planning Studies for areas within 800m of Metro stations, WalkSydney suggests a the 30km/hr zoning area for all of the rezoned lands, and 10km/h shared zones for streets that are immediately adjacent with Burwood North Metro West station, excepting Parramatta Rd: Burwood Rd North, Burton St and Loftus St.

High volumes of pedestrians can be anticipated for events at the upgraded Concord Oval and traffic infrastructure must provide safe and convenient access there from Metro West and surrounding streets. Effective cross-agency planning between Metro West, Transport agencies and Canada Bay Council and

Conclusion

WalkSydney welcomes this opportunity to respond to Sydney Metro West EIS. We share the same goals as Metro West in promoting active mobility in a wider, integrated and connected transport system, supporting movement and place centre development.

We believe these suggestions, following design verification, will better enable the EIS to meet the requirements and aspirations as laid out in the EIS. An effective cross-agency governance framework is vital to achieving these. Options for the architecture of this framework should be the highest priority in further planning. These may include:

- Robust Conditions of Consent
- Commitments in the Community Benefits Plan
- Legislative and regulatory requirements, as appropriate
- Inter-agency project teams
- Forums for Ministerial liaison and oversight.

WalksSydney looks forward to further assisting both Metro West and the City of Canada Bay on the successful development of active mobility infrastructure..

David Martin

WalkSydney (Canada Bay)

About WalkSydney

WalkSydney seeks:

- *An urban environment designed to encourage and support active transport – access to parks, playing fields and other recreational and cultural facilities*
- *Street designs that provide for the needs of people who walk, cycle and use public transport*
- *Safer, slower streets, where the speed of motor vehicles is drastically reduced by legal, environmental, and physical measures to reduce the likelihood and consequences of collisions*
 - *Safe streets to schools so that children can walk or cycle to school*
 - *Safe streets to shops so that residents can meet their daily needs*
 - *Safe streets to parks so that everyone can participate in active recreation*
 - *Safe streets to public transport stops and stations so people can reach longer distance destinations without needing a car*
- *Residential areas and streets developed for communities and not fragmented by traffic*
- *Streets that are safe and easy to cross*
- *Pedestrian priority over cars on existing and planned transport networks*
- *Connected networks of urban pedestrian and cycling facilities*
- *Shopping strips ('high streets') which are pleasant places to spend time*
- *Streets that provide shade, quiet, and clean air*
- *A city where residents feel less need to travel by car.*

