

# Red-Flagging the Bankstown Metro Extension

Evoking the Spirit of Sir Thomas Hughes & JDF –  
achieving great outcomes, not more blundering

The Premier's Communications Director diagnosed Labor's problems in 2009 this way, while the current situation is approximated, in italics:

NSW... is an effective one-party democracy. All things being equal, Labor almost always wins NSW elections. The Liberals are there to share the spoils of parliamentary office, occasionally threatening ... Unless, that is, Labor so comprehensively stuffs things up that the electorate decides it **must** be punished.... Both times the characteristic of the failing government was a **perception that it was blowing the state's fortunes on the centre of the city, to the disadvantage of the majority.**

Mark Coultan (SMH 2009) – Electorate waits to punish NSW Labor's incompetence

A debate that was out of control 10 years ago, on hyper-expensive and ineffective metro rail, is still unresolved, now soaking up the proceeds of privatisation of assets that took generations to build up.

**The main NW to Bankstown Metro follows the line of the Bradfield railways without spreading capacity. \$25 billion or so will "service" some 1% of the extra 800,000 new dwellings over 15 years, leaving no money for regions or terraces.** WestConnex is in existing areas.

Intergenerational decisions are being made in a manner that is contrary to guidelines, and Christie's, Greiner's iNSW's and others' cheaper, easier and more effective options trashed. Congestion and housing costs will increase with over-densification, contrary to the PM's pledges, while Google has already upped-stumps.



>> PAUSE & THINK <<

BEFORE SYDNEY IS DAMAGED FOR GENERATIONS

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This work is part of a broader “Saving Sydney” suite which was offered to Premier Baird in Dec '15, Jan '16 and Nov '16; and to Premier-elect Berejiklian in Jan '17, and at other times, all without any response.

## INTRODUCTION & TOC, THEN OVERVIEW

There have been protests recently that the deadline for comments on the 35,000 new dwellings required under the CBD to Bankstown housing densification plan (versus then Planning Minister Rob Stokes' hopes to also spread the load through medium density), did not give the incoming councillors time to settle their policy positions, but:

- 35,000 is about 4% of demographic growth (even that is optimistic in market and community conditions) but takes close to 100% of the transit budget
- the radial orientation is simply wrong. WestConnex and Metro capacity will be taken up by the early 2030s but population growth will continue. Corridor analysis points to obvious north/south options which the Governments failed to consider.

The “devil is in the detail” and the housing targets gloss over an indicated 67 new tower blocks in Campsie alone. This is unachievable within Sydney’s democratic framework. Of greater concern then is the consistent misinformation that those councillors, as citizens and in the pre-Administration Councils, as well as their communities and media, have received from the beginning of discussion of the Bankstown Metro. COAG said STOP this nonsense in 2009 but were ignored. iA has not got NSW in a firm perspective.

The confusion intensified as the consequences of then Minister Berejiklian’s NorthWest and related decisions in 2012 emerged. Now, in 2017, the NSW Government is still explicitly recycling Labor’s mistakes, including the “uber-Part 3A” in Campsie. It is time to undo those mistakes before calamitous damage is done to the Bankstown communities and wider systems.

The Metro carries with it tax proposals that will affect intergenerational and spatial equity. It will negatively affect parameters where the Prime Minister said his policies will have a positive effect, namely reduce congestion, “no place for ideology”, improve iA integrity, urban innovation, and housing affordability. Attention to professional standards and care for outcomes are required much more than for (say) a local hospital development.

The Bankstown Metro extension is here “red flagged” – a PAUSE is needed urgently, with consideration of how the money can be better spent.

<b>CONTEXT: CHRISTIE, GREINER AND BEREJIKLIAN</b>	<b>4</b>
Infrastructure Australia & iNSW	5
Cynicism & Leadership	6
<b>TRAVEL FLOWS – WHAT THE TRANSIT SYSTEM SHOULD DO, METROS VS OPTIONS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>CHRONOLOGY – LOSING SIGHT OF WHAT’S IMPORTANT</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>DEMOGRAPHIC LOADS &amp; ISSUES – A CRITICAL MISMATCH + CAMPSIE</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>DEMOCRATIC INTEGRITY</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER IN RESPONSES TO GOVERNMENT</b>	<b>15</b>
Legitimising projects in line with iA guidelines including medium density housing	15
Implications for Greater Sydney Commission	17
Intergenerational Equity	19

## OVERVIEW

The then Minister for Planning said the Greater Sydney Commission would herald “a new paradigm of engagement”. The founding Executive Director of Infrastructure Partnerships Australia, Dr Garry Bowditch, told the AFR in 2015 that

Community support and trust towards credible infrastructure plans must be earned with sound community engagement and better customer service outcomes. These must form the central plank of the new long-term infrastructure-planning regime, not just a focus on assets and projects. This is by far Australia's most pressing infrastructure imperative.

The Committee for Sydney observed that

*Capturing value is of no benefit unless you ensure it is delivering the right projects. New funding measures need to be partnered with a mode-neutral evaluation, appraisal of transport projects or investments.*

Current practice is the opposite. GSC is required to accept the Government's decisions, good or bad, without question. The whole Metro program turned into a rush to catch-up - the community has not been told the true implications of the Bankstown Metro extension including to Liverpool, even the "summary" business case had major gaps and 110 redactions, making it all but useless. The most important elements were put to the then Mayor of Bankstown who blanched when I asked him if he had analysed these parameters (slightly updated):

1. Increase the cost past \$20 billion without factoring in the massive social and employment costs of closing rail lines and stations for up to a year, cannibalising the Bradfield-era railways, demolishing 50 large buildings to put in new underground stations where stations already exist, and forcing transfers at major rail nodes making a 2016 version of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century "dual gauge" problem – impeding special events and emergency operations as well! Platform and track sections are to be removed and replaced (realised so late in the process – yet vehicles are available that would not require such costs and disruption while also extending services well past the narrow band of suburbs, faster and more cheaply). Economic and operational damage to the Bradfield system has not been costed. **Better use of existing assets is supposed to be an iA priority yet it endorsed the opposite**
2. Concentrate residential high-rises in a narrow band of suburbs (increasing congestion, not served by the Metro past about 1% of 664,000 new dwellings over just 15 years) [as it was then]. This is commercially risky, socially irresponsible, and worst of all, to be paid for by families and small businesses through a tax that has been promoted, without understanding it seems, by the Prime Minister, the Premier, the Committee for Sydney and the McKell Institute among others. Better, cheaper and easier to implement options are deliberately ignored – projects, technologies and taxes. Two classes of suburbs and citizens will be created. The beneficiaries? – the contractors, financiers and developers.
3. Reduce the network's passenger capacity (especially as the Bradfield system is being cannibalised) while falsely claiming the Metros will provide a 60% increase – the numbers were provided by a private operator, indeed a contractor with a vested interest, which distorted the comparison between double-decked trains and metros by about 95%. **That canard was repeated by iA which presumably did not check the numbers or understand Sydney** despite the issues being ventilated by ABC Fact Checkers, Ron Christie (former Rail Coordinator General) and the ABC's Lateline, as well as being formally submitted to Ministers and governmental inquiries. (Metro's changes to proposed timetables were surreptitious and meaningless.)
4. **Forced the projects on communities through non-elected bureaucrats in statutory agencies which have defective legislation** especially UrbanGrowth and the Greater Sydney Commission.

These points were also put to the Administrators and other Mayors who declined to respond. The Metro's housing densification targets in each of the Bankstown's Line 11 stations have been found to be *inappropriate through to impossible*.

There are better options which were ignored by the national and NSW Governments and agencies. The main option is to leave the three east/west rail lines to be foundation axes for corridor improvement; and develop a known but latent north/south axis – with east/west linkages - to allow a **new and additional band** of more traditional medium density development.

The same but possibly more powerful "cost effectiveness" logic applies to the West Metro myth, The Spit long tunnel, and various extravagant road and tram projects, all of which have options not considered by the NSW Government or iA.

## Context: Christie, Greiner and Berejiklian

There have been two major review efforts in the post-Olympics period, Ron Christie's in 2001 and 2010 being followed by Nick Greiner's iNSW in 2011-12.

The 2001 Long Term Strategic Plan by then Coordinator-General of Railways Christie proposed strengthening the existing rail network and the beginning of a new generation of Metro trains, mainly the River Metro from the North Shore through the city and out to UNSW. That would "fill gaps" in the double-decked "Bradfield"-era system. The RailCorp Board took this on in a most responsible manner and the Anzac Metro was announced by the Iemma Government in 2005-06. It was canned by the same Premier's loony-toons "experts" in DPC in early 2008, but for which it would have been Sydney's first successful transit PPP. (A major standing issue was more north/south capacity through the CBD, initially as a new heavy-rail line.)

Christie's 2009-'10 effort was sponsored by the *Sydney Morning Herald*. It emphasised the need to increase rail usage by 50% by 2021 to just maintain air quality standards. The *Herald's* transport reporter published these words in February '10:

*Every premier since Morris Iemma has ducked and weaved around Christie's most powerful and simple argument: stop trying to reinvent the wheel with heinously expensive, pie-in-the-sky, back-of-the-envelope plans for underground metros and build on what we have.... (Premier Keneally) needs to abandon completely the transport blueprint's bizarre premise that Sydney needs to create an entirely new public transport system.*

Greiner's appointment to the new iNSW was hailed by the NSW Business Chamber as the solution to past incompetence. iNSW commissioned expert reports and came up with Christie logic – put rapid transit on existing lines, defer metros and defer the 2<sup>nd</sup> Harbour Crossing. Greiner was monstereed over busways in advance of Big Projects and left to a smirk on the face of Gladys Berejiklian's sponsor, Barry O'Farrell. iNSW has not recovered its mojo since.

Both Christie and Greiner found that the Bankstown is the least stressed of all rail lines in Sydney; but the parallel East Hills line (which connects the SW with KSA and the CBD) is the highest ranked for improvement funds. There is no known record of a rational decision to go down the Bankstown route. Berejiklian's continuance of the Labor mirage is at odds with logic, without a business case (see next paragraph). There is a toon from 2009 which implies the decision came from a boozy discussion about "we can't do that so how about helping XXX" between Labor "powerbrokers".

Subsequently and especially in 2012, the then Transport Minister Berejiklian took rail planning in a contrary direction – contrary in electoral integrity, logic, community utility and impacts, financial implications, and commonsense. All without analysis, options testing, business case, benefit/cost analysis! – indeed the most expensive saving of \$200 m in world history (since the Romans – all, maybe). In 2017 she did the same with The Bays, having driven out Google with an obsession for over-the-rainbow metros. The rumoured motivation, to rid the State of the rail union, has no valid electoral or other mandate.

### Independent Option

- Delivery of a dedicated metro system, independent from the existing Sydney rail network, including a new Harbour Crossing and CBD line.
- The Independent Option would deliver the benefits of rapid transit services to customers only on new lines. It does not deliver significant benefits to the wider rail network.
- In the Sydney context an independent metro system would deliver few benefits in terms of service enhancement, capacity improvements or better operating efficiency on the existing rail network. A dedicated metro-style system would not maximise the use of the existing rail assets. It would create a separate system that would divert funding away from service improvements on the existing rail network and only provide benefits to customers who use the new lines.

Berejiklian's *Sydney's Rail Future* brochure in June '12 (which ignored the Hurstville to Strathfield option that would take trains out of central networks) described an independent Metro as unsuited to Sydney (see box at left).

The Metro's own presentations paint a different picture. The media have noticed unresolved issues including what happens on either side of the Metro's sequestration of the Bradfield-era track sections. The Metro website has this text (as in March '17):

Sydney Metro City & Southwest is fully segregated from the existing Sydney Trains railway tracks between Sydenham and Bankstown, improving the reliability of services. The T3 Line west beyond Bankstown would continue to be operated by Sydney Trains...

Christie's 50% air quality target ("outcome") has disappeared, indeed the Government has published no outcome indicators of its over-massive expenditures. Baird reduced operational KPIs. All of this defies international trends that were built on Portland's exemplar over many years including in the UK and Curitiba.

Christie and Greiner have been expunged from the official memory, which could happen in few other advanced societies. The following extracts from iNSW's SIS are apposite:

Infrastructure NSW acknowledges that (the metro) scheme represents one solution to the long term capacity challenges in the CBD. **However in the absence of detailed cost estimates and economic analysis, it is unclear whether the proposed scheme is the best value for-money solution to the problem.**

**The cost of the second harbour crossing scheme will exceed \$10 billion and funding may not be available for many years. Further, the utilisation of rapid transit both south and west of the CBD appears sub-optimal. The current proposal will serve the Bankstown Line, which carries only 6,600 passengers in the peak hour, and part of the Illawarra Line which already has good access to the CBD via the Eastern Suburbs Line.**

The alternative approach is to **introduce rapid transit services on to the existing network. Services on the NWRL would be extended into the CBD using the existing Harbour Bridge Line. Trains would then continue on the existing Inner West Line from Central to Strathfield. This approach would provide high capacity metro-style services on the most congested part of the network from Strathfield to Chatswood via the CBD. The target capacity for the rapid transit lines would be 40,000 passengers per direction per hour. It would allow passengers from the NWRL to travel to the CBD without interchanging at Chatswood.**

**Additionally, once rapid transit is introduced on the Inner West Line, the other four lines between Strathfield and the City could be exclusively used as express lines. This would mean faster and more frequent services to the CBD for passengers on the Western, Northern and South Lines.**

## Infrastructure Australia & iNSW

The Metro is "approved" under the Harbour and into the CBD even though they are questionable options, but the next phase is available for proper debate and deliberation as it can be regarded as being a house of cards. The Federal Government's Response (Nov '16) to iA's *Infrastructure Plan 2016* included the following:

*Urban rail infrastructure has the potential to transform key parts of our largest cities, efficiently connect large numbers of residents and jobs, move freight from road to rail reducing congestion, and enable private sector investment particularly through value capture approaches. To better understand current and future rail needs, the Australian Government will work with state governments to develop urban rail plans for Australia's five largest cities (including their surrounding regions). This work will include examining global trends and drivers of urban rail (including technology developments and changing demographic patterns) and linkages between rail and urban planning, and its outcomes will better inform Government investment.*

*We will continue to drive reform – with a view to Australia being well placed to manage the demands of a growing population, remain internationally competitive and continue to be an attractive investment proposition globally.*

That would be useful. iA's *Infrastructure Plan* pointed to "business case development" but without contextual analysis nor correction of a previous error about metro capacity. An illustrative example of where things went wrong at all levels of government appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* on 1 July 2011 together with an editorial "Just do it Barry"- on the project that tripled its cost due to poor pre-planning (as noted by iA re WestConnex's Business Case):

THE man who invented Infrastructure NSW yesterday told Barry O'Farrell to just get on with building light rail from the CBD to Randwick after the Premier squibbed on a decision. Mr O'Farrell instead ordered a feasibility study into the \$1 billion project.

Max Moore-Wilton, who came up with the idea of Infrastructure NSW and is soon to be appointed to its board, said the government was dragging its feet on what could be the iconic project of Mr O'Farrell's first term. The government has been accused of dithering on big issues, avoiding decisions and instead setting up a Kevin Rudd-like number of reviews since the March 26 election. The latest study will look into a light rail servicing the Sydney Cricket Ground, Sydney Football Stadium and Randwick Racecourse.

"It's a project where people would see an improvement quickly and see the O'Farrell government was focused. I don't think we should do massive studies and all the rest," Mr Moore-Wilton said. Mr Moore-Wilton said the city's existing state of "gridlock" was untenable - and light rail was cheaper than heavy rail projects

and could be built relatively quickly. "If we're going to extend it through to Randwick - and I think we need that to be a great sporting city - it makes sense to take it into the city as well," he said.

Apart from the mis-match between demographic and economic “needs” and the metros’ inappropriate orientation – which cannibalises the Bradfield-era system without adding capacity in proportion to demographic growth – the technology chosen has ridiculous constraints. The main one, reportedly, is that the herding structures to manage fast loading and unloading at stations will be installed at all stations. That means all of the 11 station sections have to be straightened – at massive cost and requiring long close-downs of the line. This is plainly unnecessary at most suburban stations.

Secondly, the decision to extend from Sydenham to Bankstown was capricious as were Baird and Berejiklian tram, tunnel, bridge and other announcements. Christie’s and iNSW’s track load investigations found that the East Hills line is most deserving of all for augmentation. That also connects with KSA and the CBD, returning via the Bridge tracks released by/if the construction of the Hurstville to Strathfield orbital.

The Government has failed to meet its promise to extend metro services to the Illawarra line but RG’s strategy will do that if implemented intelligently, properly.

No one has held the Metro agency accountable except Kristina Keneally to some degree. How will citizens of the NW and Greater West feel when they realise they could have had better services to KSA and the CBD earlier, more quickly and more cheaply? The CITY DEAL will contain no such ideas. The partial EIS for the first Metro sections did not include the route and technology options that were in open parlay in Sydney – an obvious defect in all TfNSW and subsidiaries’ libraries.

We must not lose sight of “planning” in talking about “projects”. The latter exist to progress community well-being rather than individual corporates’ profits. The point was well-made by the PIA and PCA in 2009:

Planning Institute 2009:

*Ad hoc, project-by-project decision-making does not constitute planning, and could pre-empt the best transport solution. Decisions significantly affecting the development of Sydney, such as on the Metro projects, cannot be made without an overall long-term metropolitan plan. Sydney is too important.*

Nick Greiner 2013:

*The land use plan should have come first ... There’s no point Transport doing its masterplan ... if you haven’t worked out where jobs are and where people are ... So the Metro Plan was supposed to happen along with our SIS ... so clearly that’s a bit arse-about*

Property Council 2009:

*NSW has stumbled along for years without a comprehensive transport plan for Sydney. NSW has planned project by project with no big picture to set priorities and look at overall system management. It’s time to bite the bullet, admit past mistakes and develop an integrated long term transport plan for Sydney.*

The “Government’s Response” as already quoted has that as its central, even if implicit, challenge, as did COAG.

## Cynicism & Leadership

The biggest problem facing the NSW Government (apart from their incomprehension of the principles of proper planning and engagement) seems to be community apathy and cynicism. The great historian, Frederick A Larcombe, summarised about 150 years of NSW experience in terms which apply equally to later decades especially with recent amalgamations which will impede effective regional planning:

*Public apathy has been an anathema to local government ever since its inception, and the record of colonial and state governments in the sphere of constructive leadership has been, with rare exceptions, very poor.... Apathy has reduced vitally both popular interest and participation in government. The state, meanwhile, has become adept at taking advantage ... to tamper with local government politically, and to damage its prestige. Apathy is then deepened and the downward spiral accelerates. These interacting and reinforcing problems are the main cause of the absence of progressiveness in the local government, though most council members wrongly see finance and similar day-to-day problem as the causes.*

In addition, in view of the impacts that State, mayoral, councillors, managerial, community, union, industry and intergovernmental conflicts have on housing, infrastructure, environment, social and other “local” and state outcomes, it is vital that the legislative reviews be impartial, professional, holistic and transparent.

The need for and benefits of integrating planning and local government were summarised by the Auckland (New Zealand) Royal Commission (a similar approach adopted earlier in CREATIVE RECONSTRUCTION):

*Messy and inefficient urban growth, infrastructure constraints, social disparity, and poor urban design are all areas highlighted by the Commission for urgent attention.... The cost of not substantially improving Auckland's response to the challenge of urban growth will be too high for Auckland and for New Zealand.*

*Governance arrangements affect the capacity to plan and make strategic investments on an integrated, region-wide basis, and the ability to solve the larger and longer-term challenges effectively.*

*Governance arrangements affect how much access people and communities have to the system and their ability to influence decisions about what services and initiatives they value. How local government is structured affects the cost of services and whether good value for money is delivered, the resources made available for investment, and service provision.*

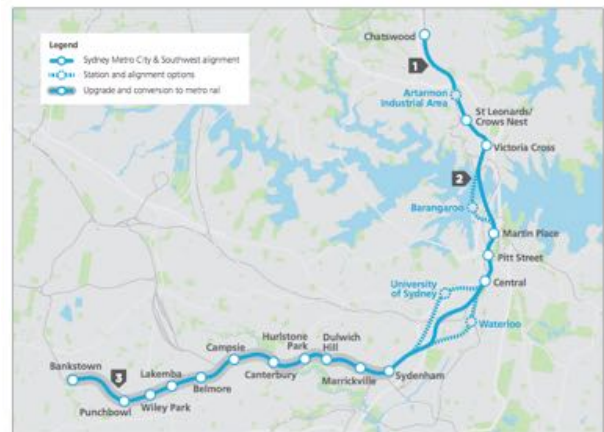
“Governance” has broken down in NSW. The refusal to look at “options” is a sickness.

Berejiklian’s Strategy director wrote an adverse story in *The Australian* on 11 February ’16, that ACIL Allen had disproven Baird’s claims that the poles and wires privatisation, featuring the Metro program, would deliver \$300 billion over 20 years in increased State productivity – the increase in congestion and discrepancies with population and employment projections would reduce travel time claimed benefits (Peter Self’s “nonsense on stilts”). He also pointed to the CBD Metro and desal plant as being discreditable for being out-of-priority order if not worthless in themselves.

## Travel Flows – what the transit system should do, metros Vs options

The start point of the thinking in this report was in 1995 when the current author gained the approval of the then Cabinet to start a comparative corridor assessment; leading coincidentally to the *Urban Transport Statement* in 2006 –which showed the main corridors in Sydney as opposed to gaps (congestion axes, below left). The current Metro (at right) maintains the existing Bradfield’s pattern at great expense and no payback and does not service the north-south “orbital” flows:

Urban Transport Statement (2006)



### Potentially the largest flow in Sydney:

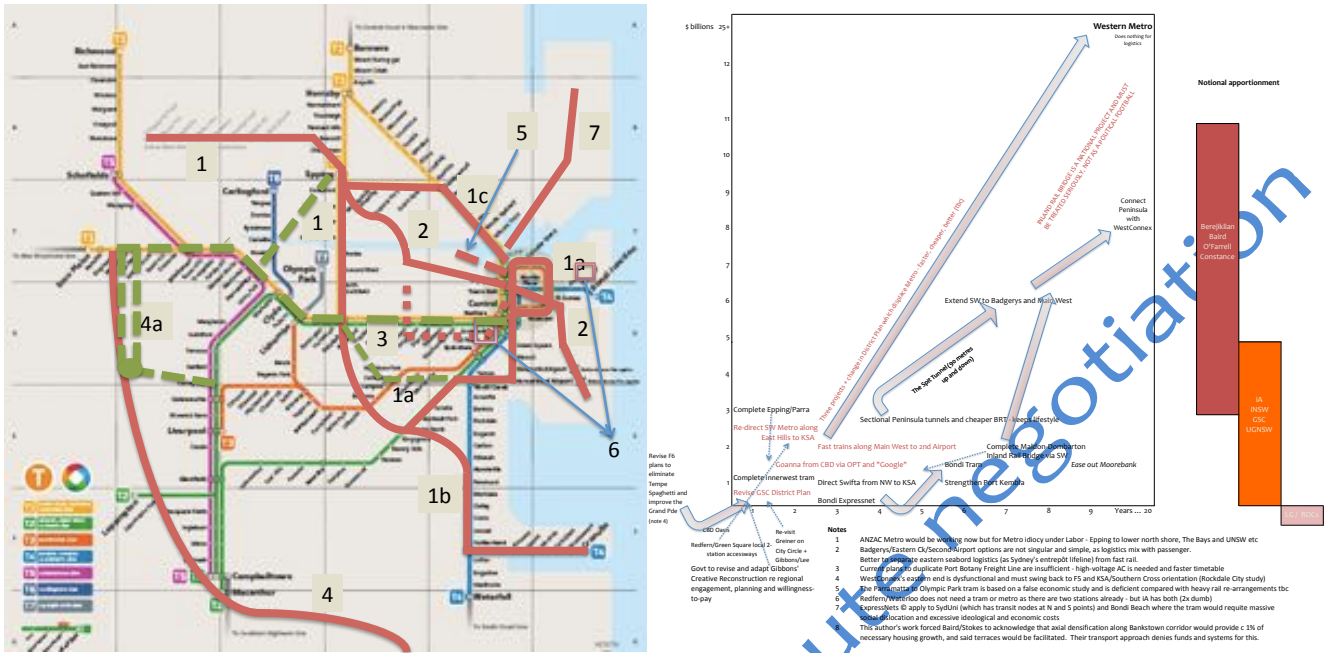
Hurstville to Macquarie Park 4.46 m passenger kilometres per day  
 Camden/Campbelltown to Macq Pk 6.37 m

Sir Thomas Hughes was the first Lord Mayor of Sydney and he led the greatest Reform Council in the world. He and his colleagues such as John Daniel Fitzgerald, John Garlick, Dr James Graham and Allen Taylor worked wonders through various reform processes, but especially drove a housing strategy based on “urban eugenics”, or healthy communities.

Moving families out of slums required clean and cheap transport back into the central industrial and commercial zones – hence the £27 million spent on the Harbour Bridge, underground “metro” and suburban electrified trains, all being Railways works.

An attempt was made by Labor to raise a third of the Bridge’s £9 million through a municipal levy but the Conservatives negated that, as they did later in the Macarthur Industrial Area. Hughes had tried to do “value capture” in Oxford Street’s redevelopment but the calculations were too hard.

On the left below are the main route-coverage elements in EDDINGTON BEDROCK, and on the right, the increased costs and delays of Berejiklian’s signature mega-style as criticised (without naming names) by iA – timing is important, the Goanna sits in a different timeframe to the West Metro and the loss of Google is enough pain from inappropriate delays:



The full scale forms are in separate documents

The 2006 numbers need to be updated but the availability of “options” can be intuited. The Metro already provides a station at Barangaroo that points the wrong way. The longer Metro cannot serve the dominant flows which will be road-based, increasing the public and private costs of congestion, in the absence of the Gibbons “augmentation” options. As Lucy Turnbull’s quote stated, the only way forward is a vigorous public debate that is backed by a government-endorsed (iA?) publication series.

It is not possible at the moment to assess and measure the operational, financial, environmental, aesthetic and other effects of one transport and land use pattern compared with others – as the RTA’s *Future Directions* (1991) attempted. **But the NSW Government cannot refute this critique because it hasn’t done its homework on its own work let alone alternatives.**

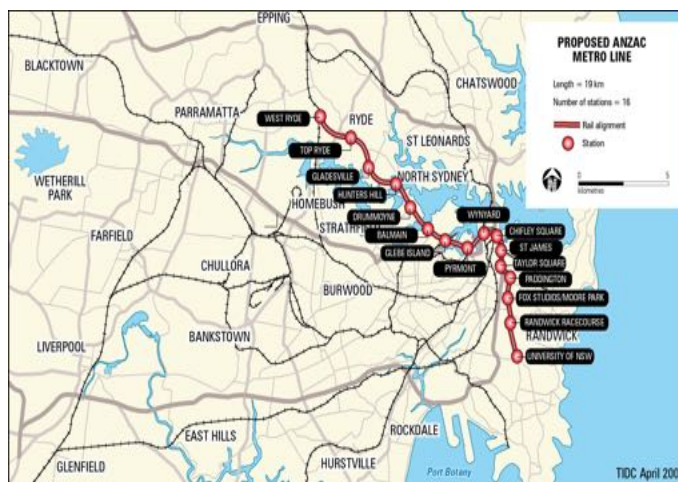
Ron Christie’s 2001 map is at left with the River Metro labelled in green. The Anzac Metro Line would have been approximately 19 kilometres long. It would run from the University of NSW through Paddington and across the city to Wynyard. The introduction of a metro rail system, “filling gaps”, to these areas would have significantly reduced the reliance and need for increased bus services and private vehicle use to access the CBD. It would have obviated the need for innercity light rail. This would reduce congestion on Anzac Parade, Victoria Road and Anzac Bridge. Improved services would be provided to special events along the route and including NYE fireworks and Australia Day, the Moore Park sporting precinct and Royal Randwick Racecourse, and the University.

RailCorp’s adaptation had an estimated direct catchment of 220,000 people against the CBD Metro’s 10,000. The Labor Metromeisters killed the project for no logical reason. The myths, or “elephants in the room” remaining include:

- That a second rail crossing of the Harbour is necessary when the real need is for a N/S connection to the west of the CBD – like the one already there between Rhodes and Meadowbank on the Main North Line. There is no point in pumping more commuters into the centre only to send them out again but that is exactly what the TfNSW/Metro Black Box “thinkers” do
- That the extravagant closure then reconstruction of suburban lines to run metro trains is necessary. Metros can and do run in heavy rail corridors elsewhere and should do here. 50 large buildings are being demolished, with massive congestion and environmental damage, unnecessarily. Both Christie and the NSW reports



focused on upgrading train and signalling controls on the existing network and that remains the real priority. Running metros then becomes easier. The saving would be in the billions.



The proposed "Anzac Metro" line would provide a new transport link to areas that currently rely on buses and private vehicles to access the CBD. It also picks up inner areas of the city that are identified to increase in growth and consolidation of development and population.

Options have been canvassed in the preceding sections including the suite of policies and projects in EDDINGTON BEDROCK but the BIG PICTURE is that there are many, all not considered by the NSW Government. One out of left field coming from this author's work over the years is:

**Where can public transport be improved by using the middle of freeways and under-used roads?**

- Perth to Mandurah rail is the exemplar and then-Minister Alannah MacTiernan the inspiration; however fast rail to Canberra/Newcastle and the new Airport Site are possibles;
- there are ideas for busways in allocated lanes on congested roads in all cities
- there are new models (PRT) for light rail as seen in Bath, applied by RG to Bondi Beach and SydUni (rejected by both "targets").

The emphasis is on giving communities a cost-effective choice of driving or using public transport on time/cost grounds, given project costs, investment needs and the private costs of motoring in all cities and regions.

Volvo produced this graphic showing the potential of Bus Rapid Transit to change congestion patterns (subway equalling metro trains):



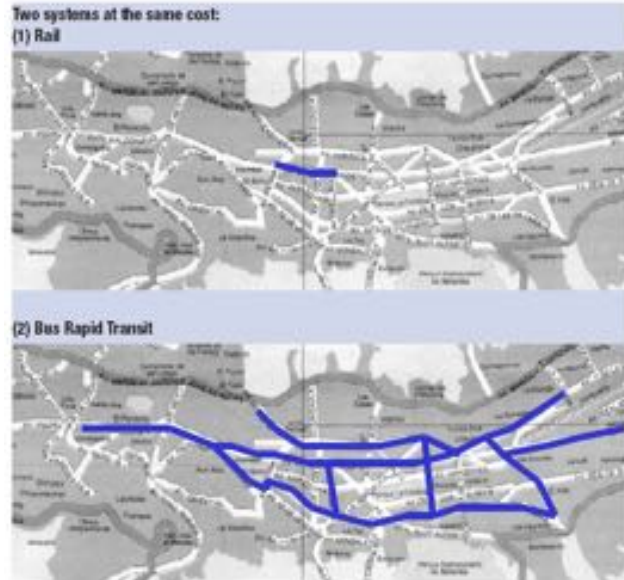
The logic was explained in Greiner's SIS. It was also charted this way in SUTP's *Sustainable Transport: a sourcebook for policy-makers in developing cities* (2003 as updated), with congestion, equity and energy implications.

## Chronology – losing sight of what’s important

It is essential to remember that Labor’s Metro furore was re-ignited in 2012 after then Transport Minister Berejiklian took-in senior staffers from the main metro lobby groups and reversed the Coalition’s promise to reject the “fiasco”/”stench” of the Labor metros.

The Planning Institute’s views in 2009 on the CBD Metro still apply to the CBD and SW Metro – which had gone through no financial, planning, environmental, engineering or other statutory process when they commenced property resumptions, clearance of tenants in 50 high-rise buildings and community mis/information campaigns.

A complete chronology from 1900 has been compiled but the essence is in this short form:



TURNING POINT						
2001	2009	2011	2012	2013	2013	2014
Christie Report contains a comprehensive agenda for strengthening the Bradfield rail system plus adaptation through selected metros 20 years down the line	Iemma/Rees Labor fear RTBU and handover of broken promises. They "think-up" a series of Metro blunders, leading to cancellation of all in 2010. Metro lobbies complain and continue campaign	O'Farrell had called Labor's metros a "fiasco" coming from a "stench" of capricious politicisation of transport. (iA questioned value of NW Link.) Promised to stay with Bradfield, set up iNSW under Nick Greiner	Baird's Budget contained Bradfield; but Berejiklian had recruited three Metro lobbyists. iNSW reported: keep largely to Christie agenda, use City Circle more, defer metros and 2nd Crossing, N/S bus tunnel in CBD, undergrounding of Parra Road (no go)	Berejiklian reduced diameter of NW tunnels to eliminate Bradfield and interoperability. Announced three metros - NW to Sydenham, Bankstown, Illawarra, demonised Baird and danced when he resigned	Berejiklian finds she cannot link Sydenham with Illawarra. Planning Minister Stokes announces densification approaches to Bankstown Corridor, UGNSW scares everyone with doubling of targets along Parra Rd	Metros realise they have to reconstruct long sections of the Bankstown line to straighten them, to allow (wrong) vehicles to serve stations. Closure for up to 12 months unannounced previously. Planning Minister Stokes ups then downs housing targets

Lessons of history need to be placed against statements so that judgements can be properly informed regarding the Minister’s use of the mantra, *Those who do not understand history are bound to repeat its mistakes.* Minister Stokes’ PhD thesis has been quoted by the *Sydney Morning Herald* to include a Fitzgerald/Hughes-type viewpoint:

*The progressive erosion of effective democratic institutions in planning by state governments is likely to increase the political potency of planning as an election issue at a state government level.*

Underlying the above, planning myopia means politicians cannot see past their noses, they see what they can see today but not into the future. Spatial blindness means they think about what they can see, not what lies beyond the innercity boundaries to the great expanses of Sydney’s suburbs and industries. Malcolm Turnbull used the term “anachronistic spatial determinism” which seems to apply to both. Overlying all is the degradation of the NSW public sector since the 1980s and the increasing dominance in project selection – rather than policy formulation - of populist politicians.

These terms matter because Sydney lacks planning credibility and robust infrastructure pipelines. There is a recognition that each sub-region of Sydney has its own needs but there is a strategic imperative to re-balance the State urban budget, with key projects at the core guaranteed but with other projects managed through the capabilities of the regions.

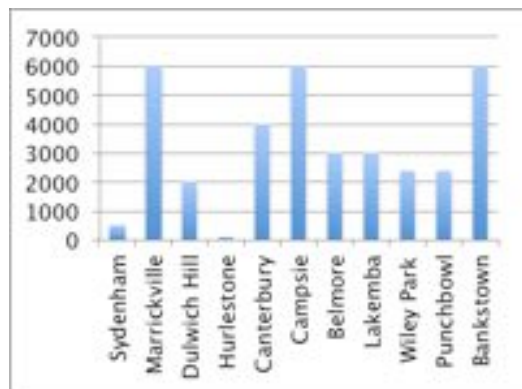
More honesty in suburban densification from the Metro and DOPE is needed as seen in the next section.

## Demographic Loads & Issues – a critical mismatch + Campsie

As in 1908-09, demographic realities are (supposedly) the driving forces behind transport re-prioritisation. Not so: there has been a series of governmental mishaps with housing targets and dislocation with transport projects. UGNSW (Planning Minister Hazard’s “Landcom on steroids”) started with the Anzac Pde activation zone which process collapsed because of clumsy community engagement – the chairman had been warned by this author and others but they charged on to the precipice. Then UGNSW tool over the Parramatta Road corridor and abruptly doubled residential targets – then the Planning Minister had to back off.

The Bankstown Line has 11 stations in the densification targets, stated to total 35,000, distributed as at right. Building height was stated to be up to 25 storeys. Sydenham is controlled by ANEF limits imposed by aviation authorities and is regarded as commercially marginal.

An alternative way of looking at it is to estimate how many towers of say 6, 8, 12 or 25 storeys each would be needed to provide each number, with various FSRs and averaging unit sizes at 100 m<sup>2</sup>. The 25 floor standard is similar to the two Zenith Towers in Chatswood (each 24 storeys and 94 m high).



The assumption is that there would be a “St Leonards Central” pattern of 1,330 units over 141 floors or an average of 9 per floor.

Thus we have the numbers of buildings in each station precinct (presumably within 500 m of the station) in the right hand cell. Some are patently absurd such as Campsie where Beamish Street is archetypal low-rise and very busy already – the road infrastructure will not permit such densification if rail capacity does not increase (which it won’t). Will the community accept that the Canterbury station precinct will become more dense than is Chatswood’s, within its road constraints?

	10 floors	25 floors
Sydenham	6	2
Marrickville	67	24
Dulwich Hill	22	8
Hurlestone Park	1	0
Canterbury	44	16
Campsie	67	24
Belmore	33	12
Lakemba	33	12
Wiley Park	27	10
Punchbowl	27	10
Bankstown	67	24
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	393	142

The meaning is that each town centre has a character and an infrastructure context that will bear on whether 5 or 50 towers could be erected

in each, apart from the commercial risk of high-density in quiet suburbs. The Residential Flat Design Code provides that “use of towers should reinforce a regional urban form strategy”, yes, but this is a city in governance crisis so where is the “character” formation happening?

In 2010-11 the Coalition promised to make Part 3A a defining difference with Labor. Campsie is an example of a much more dramatic intervention in a suburb, more in the spirit of then Planning Minister Hazzard’s “Landcom on steroids”.

The Department of Planning’s presentation has to be described as misleading: their artist’s impression is of a low rise Beamish Street as it will never be with 60 or more 10-storey apartment blocks and no additional road or rail capacity.

The development industry used to advocate Vancouver’s approach of consultative pre-planning. The Metro’s approach is the opposite.

The nature of suburbia is low density as shown in the Google Map aerial:



### Campsie Station Precinct



The axial nature of the congestion in sequential town centres, the limited number of crossings of the rail line, and the built-up nature of all precincts (making large site clearances very expensive) means that congestion will increase in what can be likened to the Maginot Line. WestConnex will worsen congestion in many areas including the innerwest (where another component of EDDINGTON BEDROCK, the Goanna Transit Bridge, will ease pressures). No press mention has been sighted of GSC involvement in this central process.

The City Futures unit in UNSW has raised concerns about “heat sink” effects; while AECOM and the Metro’s business partner MTR have different positions:

- MTR is headlined in the SMH on 17 December 2015 as being “The operator of Hong Kong's metro system (who) wants to strengthen its grip on Australia's rail network, eyeing opportunities to build and run new lines in Sydney and Melbourne. MTR Corporation, which runs Melbourne's Metro and will run Sydney's first private commuter railway the Sydney Metro Northwest, is also looking to export its business model, where property development near and above train stations funds the construction of new lines.
  - Chief executive Lincoln Leong said Australia was a critical market for the company, which is 76 per cent owned by the Hong Kong government, and it sought "end to end" work where it built, operated and maintained rail lines. MTR's interest is not unrequited. **Premier Mike Baird and Transport Minister Andrew Constance have, according to their diaries, met with MTR representatives in Australia** and federal Cities Minister Jamie Briggs visited the company's Hong Kong headquarters in recent weeks. **The rail-plus-property model is a form of "value capture" – a broad term for a finance model that works to capture the windfall gain in land value that property owners experience when public infrastructure is built nearby.**
  - But MTR's approach in Hong Kong has been criticised by some, including AECOM's Asia Pacific executive director of buildings and places, Guy Perry, who labelled their residential developments "fortresses" that were geared towards profit. The company has only exported the rail plus property model to mainland China, but Mr Leong is quick to say it would be used differently in Sydney and would not mean 60-storey

apartment blocks sprouting in the suburbs. "The rail-and-property model need not just be massive buildings above stations or depots. There are many different ways of skinning the cat," Mr Leong said.

- **It makes financial sense for MTR to look to expand in Australia. The company's projects in Australia contributed more revenue – about \$770 million – than any of their other international ventures in the half year to June 30.**
- Dec 19 2015 MTR does not have property development rights for the Sydney Metro Northwest, the high speed rail line between Rouse Hill and Chatswood, but it is bidding for new contracts for the extension of the line under Sydney Harbour, through the CBD and to Bankstown. The federal government is also considering how value capture could be used to fund a rail link to the proposed Badgerys Creek airport, including the option of contracting developers to build stations and the communities around them.

The “housing mix” argument was explained succinctly in “Housing mix will save Sydney from ‘one-dimensional future, [Michael Grosvenor] says” in the *SMH* on 29 March ’15. That view was attacked by the Urban Taskforce’s CEO regularly and recently, but in the context of supporting strong town centres, against market demand for terraces (see “Unrealistic Great Australian Dream of a quarter-acre block is over for Sydneysiders” in *Domain* on 21 September ’16. High commercial risks in the high-rise markets have been reported over many years; while widespread experience is that many blocks are held empty due to speculation by overseas investors or by large developers waiting for market revivals.

Somewhat similarly, mixed commercial/residential mixes have been questioned by regional economic appraisals as owners give preference to carparks over rail stations.

Value Capture is a much misunderstood and unrealistic option in many contexts, which was the finding of Greiner’s iNSW’s *State Infrastructure Strategy*. It would impose taxes on house buyers and renters and on commercial and retail operators, but take risk off the HK Metro operator which explicitly wants to build the high-rises over and adjacent to the Metro. Both national and state governments wanted those taxes everywhere, meaning inequities between east and west and generations will increase and housing affordability worsen. Value capture will:

- “trickle” funds inappropriately as the Property Council of Australia has argued. That is inconsistent with the “project pipeline” notions
- make investments more attractive by shifting risks and costs to families and lessees
- worsen inequalities between the new-overtaxed Vs the old-subsidised
- require expensive administrative agencies, see the USA’s state accounting manuals and commissions. It has been argued by Greiner and Mant among others that is administratively impossible; while it has been rejected by Coalition Governments in every earlier case so why would their values suddenly flop upside-down?
- reduce affordable housing as many have said, and that is within an overall private sector model that Professor Bill Randolph says has failed to deliver a proper balance of housing types. Reform is underway but densification might equal slumification.

Both governments ignored the lessons of history from the Harbour Bridge and Cumberland Country Council projects which were more equitable and efficient. The Committee for Sydney issued a glowing report on value capture in late 2015 which contained many errors and misunderstandings (and refused to re-issue a corrected edition).

What the corporate history does not reveal is that developer levies largely failed to materialise in the otherwise exemplary London CrossRail project (as at mid-’16); the similar Parramatta Road value capture proposal (at \$200 per square metre) was attacked by the Urban Taskforce as pushing up costs and prices unreasonably; and that fringe residents expect rural lots to be 800 square metres or larger, meaning a per-property annual levy across the Maldon-Dombarton potential corridor of over \$200,000 (half of the full cost of a plot in Picton or Tahmoor, added to existing taxes and levies and therefore setting a new low in fringe land affordability).

## Democratic Integrity

The main agencies “planning” Sydney are un-elected. iA, UrbanGrowth NSW, the Greater Sydney Commission and iNSW cover disjointed bits of the checkerboard but none do “the whole”.

The Baird Government introduced the creation of the Greater Sydney Commission with much fanfare. The Chief Commissioner-elect, Lucy Turnbull, published *Sydney A Biography* in 1999 which was quoted in the following (somewhat mistaken) terms by the then Planning Minister (the “Movement” had a different meaning to his intention, see below):

*Perhaps, at a time when the Sydney region has been enjoying such a surge in economic activity, it is time to revive the idea promoted early in the twentieth century of a 'Greater Sydney Movement'. The planning and future of Sydney, at both a tangible and an intangible level, should not be left to a sometime apparently ill-coordinated cluster of state government departments ... and an almost dizzying plethora of forty-one councils, to name just a few. There should be a way of looking at this great city in its entirety rather than as a maze of fiefdoms, each with its own agenda and set of priorities. ... Only by becoming involved can the city's residents ensure that the nature of the growth and development of Sydney is as good as our city and its people deserve*

Minister Stokes gave the impression he did not understand that the Greater Sydney movement focussed, as its core direction, on taking power off an uncaring and inefficient State Government and giving it to a municipal parliament which would build a spirit of citizenship, a strong taxation base and a positive plan for the future city of 2,000,000. So we're clear, in 1894 solicitor and board director Thomas Hughes appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* arguing for a restructuring of local government along the London County Council lines. *The Herald* editorialised on 11 June 1896,

*we only have to mention such subjects as public health, water and sewerage, electric lighting, abattoirs, the control of traffic, theatres, and public parks and recreation grounds, to see the necessity of calling into existence a body intermediate between the local council and the general Legislature, and to serve at once as Parliament and Government of the general metropolis.*

The State Government was indifferent and incompetent as opposed today's which is inefficient and out of line with community and intergenerational interests. Stokes' actual notion is seen in the following quotes:

SMH 21 June 2015

The Baird government will tackle Sydney's housing affordability crisis by shaking up metropolitan planning with an independent Greater Sydney Commission tasked with ensuring 664,000 new homes are built by 2031.

The NSW budget will contain funding to establish the London-style commission, a year after it was announced by Premier Mike Baird, It will cut through arguments with individual councils over hot issues such as high-rise apartments and transport. Mr Baird has previously said the commission would streamline the way infrastructure and urban planning is delivered, particularly for projects such as the WestConnex, which extends across multiple Council areas.

Since then, multiple major rail, light rail and road projects have been announced that are expected to transform Sydney, and will impact on housing.

The Urban Development Institute of Australia's NSW chief executive Stephen Albin said ... *We've got no clear metropolitan development program, and no sub-regional plans have been released*

SMH 7 September 2015

"Our model seeks to depoliticise planning decisions by having a board that does not need to seek re-election," Mr Stokes said...  
... serving mayors, councillors or MPs will be ineligible from (serving), as will property developers.

DT 21 June 2015

PREMIER Mike Baird's new Greater Sydney Commission will focus on overriding the self-interested NIMBY decisions being made by Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore and other councils

Planning minister Rob Stokes said the government would assign \$19 million in tomorrow's Budget

Asked about his views on the controversial Lord Mayor, Mr Stokes said: "I think the Greater London Authority is a good example

"Like every council, the City of Sydney needs to recognise that it's part of a greater metro region that is not an island of itself; that there are plenty of people who work in Sydney every day who have just as much interest in the shape of the CBD and the core as the residents who are there." ... particular councils will say 'we don't want housing in our area because we're special'. (But) it won't be good enough to make up excuses as to why things don't happen."

Its mission would be to unify planning and housing projects to avoid problems such as houses being built where the North West Rail was supposed to go ....

"Sydney is a city that grows but doesn't think," Mr Stokes said. "For too long we've seen literally billions of dollars in extra infrastructure costs or lost productivity because there haven't been matched-up decisions in terms of planning and housing. "What the Greater Sydney Commission needs to do is direct that process

The Government has relied on its marketing ploys retaining credibility in the face of media complacency. The growing cynicism – since 1995 – in the community has made that increasingly infeasible.

# Elements to consider in responses to Government

The NSW Government is finalising its views on the housing densification aspects of the CBD to Bankstown Metro. The issues are much broader than that. The Metro should face a debate over

- the routes it chose and specifically why not the East Hills/KSA line
- its non-observance of accepted assessment procedures
- the implications of its vehicle technology especially on the costs of modifying major sections of the Bankstown line, and
- the housing cost, congestion, energy and community dysfunctionalities of its preferred urban development pattern.

iA, iNSW and other agencies should be required to publicly address the same and wider considerations arising from not implementing COAG, Commission of Audit and their own strategic and project standards.

## Legitimising projects in line with iA guidelines including medium density housing

In late 2009 the majority of States and Territories saw NSW as sucking funds out of the national pool and creating bad impressions, so COAG decided that

*State and Territories will have capital city strategic plans by 2012 that meet national criteria for transport, housing, urban development and sustainability.... The national criteria will deliver better integrated and longer term - 30 year - infrastructure and land use plans. The criteria require planned, evidence based land release to improve housing affordability, better transport planning to tackle urban congestion, and new urban development to be better linked to transport, jobs and services.*

*The Commonwealth must have confidence in the integrity of a capital city's strategic planning system if it is to invest in that city.*

The timetable included getting an interim report on consistency to NSW in April 2011; provide a report back to COAG in November '11; and report publicly in February '12. One might well ask, with COAG sloughing off its urban responsibilities in 2012, what had changed?

Certainly not NSW which was the target. iA keeps saying that funding will be dependent on adherence but doesn't follow-up; while politicians keep making capricious, ideological announcements that are made into decisions by compliant and unprofessional apparatchiks.

NSW has ignored options with a notional waste of some \$30 billion. The table at right is speculative but better than anything the Government has produced. iA's Australian Infrastructure Plans (2016 and 2017) found that

*instances of poor project selection and weak governance continue to occur. Recent history shows governments committing to investments before completing long-term planning or rigorous economic analysis, favouring large 'iconic' projects over smaller, often higher value, investments; and not releasing the full business case for multi-billion dollar projects.*

*In addition, a lack of transparency and genuine community engagement has undercut public confidence in governments' ability to make the best investment decisions. This makes it harder to build community support for future investments and complex reforms that will be required to meet Australia's infrastructure needs*

Notional "savings" from observing proper option and scenario testing			Value
WestConnex	Eastern portal Route	Use Brereton expressway and M5 connection Better plan and engage in advance (iA comments)	low impact who knows?
	Defer		c \$ 10 billion
Bankstown	Route	Assess option/add East Hills KSA	who knows?
	Stations	Drop straightening & cattle cages in 'burbs	\$2+20 billion
Inner Orbital	Hurstville to Strathfield	Middle band densification	c \$15 billion in route and housing yields
		Multiple routes	
NorthWest	Flexity Swiftas	Straight down Main North towards Hurstville	was \$12 billion
Peninsula	2008	Eliminate though traffic in Cremorne & Mosman Short tunnel sections, no densification w/o plan	\$3 billion
The Bays / West	The Goanna	Save 8 years, save \$7+ b, + 16,000 units, achieve iconic "Fireworks"	\$7+ 10 billion
Parramatta & 2nd Airport	Western fast trains	Complete Epping/Parra Release City Circle	c \$14 billion l/t
Bondi & SydUni ExpressNets		Delete tram mistakes, reduce congestion/parking	who knows?
Innerwest tram extension		Complete route and add patronage	c \$2 billion over time
ES trams		Use Bradfield Town Hall to Whitlam Sq	c \$5 billion in r/e yields

NB Inner Orbital, NW Flexity and ES trams are interconnected

Stripping away the “clothes of the Emperor”, we have this overview which is based on detailed chronologies of tram, metro and road “approval” processes (it is open to debate):

	Treasurer			Transport			Premier		
	Options	Ratios	Engagement	Options	Ratios	Engagement	Options	Ratios	Engagement
Baird	X	X	X	-	-	-	X	X	X
Berejiklian	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Constance	X	X	X	X	X	X			

+ Did well      ⊖ Dubious, to be debated      X Failure

Note: Eddington in London and Melbourne got 3 ticks, Christie 1, 1 dubious and fail on engagement

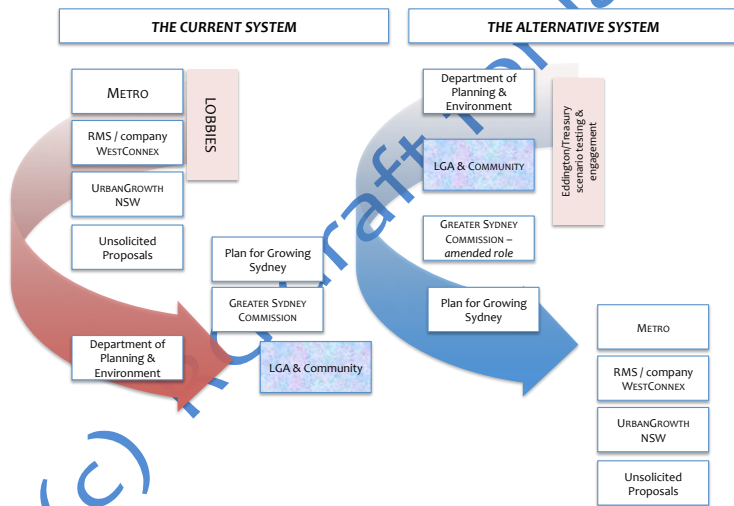
An enveloping crypto-political truth came from Professor George Williams, Professor of Law at the University of NSW:

A lack of enforceable rules and an absence of other accountability measures means that political parties are prone to develop into individual fiefdoms. Key figures have been able to distribute power through patronage networks in return for favours.

With Sydney’s dominant projects, the “how did this happen?” comes back to a breakdown in the quality of executive government and the increasing influence of corporate lobbies. There has been political and Party discussion of elements of lobbyists but we can see the economic consequences in just transport amounting to many \$ billions of taxpayers’ money.

How can this be changed? For a start, iA needs to stop being a cheerleader. Its passages on the Bankstown Metro, West Metro, The Spit and the Waterloo/Green Square have not met professional standards. They are not reproduced here but have been in a special paper.

Then the housing patterns inherent in different rail development strategies have to be assessed independently of Government for reasons stated in the Grattan’s *Roads to Riches*, shown below with a synopsis of this author’s proposed reworking of the planning systems across Australia:



**5.1 Governments should not be able to commit public money to transport infrastructure until a rigorous, independent like-for-like evaluation and the underlying business case have been tabled in the parliament**

**State spending**

State government ministers should only be able to commit public funding to transport infrastructure projects after a rigorous independent evaluation and the underlying business case for the project has been tabled in the parliament.

The evaluation of the business case should be conducted by an agency that is independent, with clarity of mission, and is sufficiently resourced and skilled.

The patterns will include genuine mixtures of high, medium and low density housing, limitations of TODs, and equity and efficiency between taxation options. The dominant thinking of the MTR model is to be replaced by an independent and expert agency. Transport would follow, not lead, “planning” logic and engagement.

This is not anti-democratic. The Improvement of Sydney Commission and the Cumberland County Council were independent and representative, both. There are too many linkages nowadays between politicians and development interests. The Askin Government established a top-level interdepartmental committee called CUMPTAC then TRANSAC which was continued by Wran Unsworth and then called for by Bruce Baird. This writer was its Secretary in the early 1980s. There was no industry or lobby representation and all interactions were proper and public. The system worked really well – and both Transport and Planning departments had



higher productivity and lower costs than today's mega-agencies. The Minister for Transport, Peter Cox, had no Labor identities or even ALP members on his personal staff. How unlike that is with current practices of lesser repute.

Classic failures of governmental competence were all cycles in the greyhounds fiasco including the final Cabinet approval, Premiers Baird's then Berjiklian's metro and tram announcements, and The Spit tunnel. In addition, the cross-membership between agencies and lobbies is extraordinary and has to lead to questions as to what each side achieves that they cannot do through transparent but ethical external Chinese Walls as with TRANSAC. A code of interaction between agencies and lobbies is needed, around these principles:

1. Targets: agency or official office/rs with responsibility for decisionmaking and/or advice in an ASIC industry sector/s. Includes ministerial offices, central bodies overseeing agencies, and audit/review roles
2. Lobbyists: industry association, company or individual representing members and commercial interests in the related ASIC sector/s
3. Persons in the target bodies must not
  - a. Attend meetings at or otherwise advise lobbyists
  - b. Communicate in any form with lobbyists
  - c. Accept any favours or gratuities, present or future, from lobbyistsexcept in accordance with PMC guidelines and real-time, on-line public reporting.

## Implications for Greater Sydney Commission

The Coalition Premiers from 2011, as with Labor Premiers before them, eschewed the integration of planning and local government reform. Hughes' cause was the "Greater Sydney Movement" which was more philosophical than practical (still powerful) as anti-amalgamation forces were fierce. The Movement tried to achieve integration of effort away from State inertia; and Hughes' genius was that most rare of qualities nowadays, leadership.

The Greater Sydney Commission was set up with high expectations and eminent personnel. However, the Government has not delivered an "independent" Commission in several respects. The roles and functions of four committees and five statutory appointees are ill-defined. Central planning excludes municipal representatives. The CEO only has "day to day" responsibilities but is seen to exercise wide discretions. The geographical boundaries seem to have not been based on either catchment or population mass considerations, which is a major missed opportunity after decades of discussion (which the Minister should have been aware of).

The Commission actively preached WestConnex only to be embarrassed by the inherent defects they seem not to have detected. No complaint was made when the 2<sup>nd</sup> Crossing received "planning approval" 10 months before any semblance of Business Plan was published. The redevelopment of Canterbury Racecourse became the main media item for several days in July but it had not been even mentioned in GSC's draft District Plan – employment, transport, housing or any other implications.

The Commission does not have scope to create a "vision" or funding for infrastructure development which is a repetition of a main reason for the failure of the Cumberland County Council and of Minister Knowles' DIPNR's special implementation unit, among others.

When the new Planning Minister took over, he promised that there would be a "new paradigm of engagement" through the GSC but then locked the GSC out of project planning and design of WestConnex, Metros and tramways – with the only feedback loop being a set of unexciting word changes to the overarching Metro Plan. (GSC promised metrics but left out an effective feedback loop to pre-planning.)

The GSC's draft District Plans describe problem situations with studied understatement but then say how they could be addressed, not solved (example is Bankstown considering MANS and Leda controversy, both raised issues).

Example of not solving a long-term issue:

*We are aware that the long-term strategic positioning of Bankstown Airport including land will need a strategic focus. We will work with the NSW Government, local councils and, where appropriate, the Australian Government in the development of the long-term strategy for this important area.*

Their overarching concept of “Three Cities” has no merit in terms of social, demographic, employment or systems changes not in the Government’s plans, which means none at all.

There are no protections against non-pecuniary conflicts of interest. This topic has been widely discussed and is potentially vital given the scope and depth of the Commission’s involvements. In the case of pecuniary conflicts, absencing oneself from particular matters might not be sufficient protection of the public interest given that major rezonings and infrastructure matters will be involved (and remembering ICAC investigations).

Neither the Greater Sydney Commission nor IA/INSW have published a metropolitan or district assessment matrix, which matches risks with options, effectiveness scores and cost projections; so neither can say their context and project discussions give the basis for an “evidence-based” approach that will solve problems – indeed, the Metros, light rail, road and taxation streams will cause problems that are not even acknowledged.

Its Districts are a bit eccentric, for example “West Central” is not central West and it’s not west of central, it’s Blacktown, parts of the former Auburn, Parramatta and Holroyd, parts of the former Parramatta, The Hills, Auburn, Holroyd and Hornsby, and The Hills.

It’s not easy to find which District Plan deals with the Bankstown Metro – it’s also not South West (even though it is). “South” mixes Campsie and Cronulla. The local authorities which “welcome” various ideas – Metros, “trackless trams”, trams, value capture – don’t show an understanding of options and consequences. State Ministers deceive them with impunity. Taking the two biggest projects in urban Australia, both supported by Prime Ministers and Premiers (and agencies) and prominent citizens, as ideological or emotional concepts, the scorecard is not happy.

It is doubtful that GSC will survive unchanged, especially if it remains “hands off” on projects as linked with land use and general commonsense. ResPublica’s “Civic Limits” issued the right challenge which has not been heard in NSW:

*All parts of government will need to change if they are to deliver effective involvement. Local government, in particular, should seek to use the opportunities and challenges created by current financial pressures to deliver transformational change in the way they do things. Rather than protecting existing ways of doing business, they should embrace innovation and experiment with radically new relationships and new ways of making decisions and delivering services.*

Examples of “preaching” (NB involved in housing decisions? – above):

*In addition to the general guidance in A Plan for Growing Sydney, we propose the following criteria for investigating urban renewal corridors:*

- *Alignment with investment in regional and district infrastructure. This acknowledges the catalytic impacts of infrastructure such as Sydney Metro Northwest and Sydney Metro City & Southwest, NorthConnex, WestConnex, Sydney CBD and South East Light Rail, Parramatta Light Rail, Northern Beaches Hospital and any future NSW Government investments. It also acknowledges the opportunities created by enhancements to existing infrastructure.*

*The NSW Government has announced a new underground metro railway line will be built between Parramatta City and Sydney City to help cater for Sydney’s growth. Sydney Metro West will provide a direct connection between Parramatta City and Sydney City, linking communities not previously serviced by rail as well as supporting growth between the two major centres.*

*The Sydney Metro West project will focus ... because of the greater potential to transform communities, create new ones and link them using a new state-of-the-art public transport system. Beyond this corridor, opportunities to extend the line east and west will also be considered.*

*NB West Metro is a travesty of failed procedures*

*Accessibility to regional transport, noting that high-frequency transport services can create efficient connections to local transport services and expand the catchment area of people who can access regional transport within a decent travel time.*  
*Emphasise “can”*

*In the week that WestConnex has been revealed to have failed at Port Botany and KSA:*

*The WestConnex project has been designed to improve freight movements in the South District.*

## Intergenerational Equity

Intergenerational equity means we pass on a better world than we inherited. It also means that we don't pass on dead debt to our descendants. The NSW Government is breaching every possible guideline:

1. Metros will change urban structure to increase congestion and worsen housing affordability – servicing no more than 5%, and more likely 1%, of population growth with 100% of the transit budget is monumentally stupid
2. Metros will damage the Bradfield-era system which the Government is glossing over – that disregard for responsibility amounts to near maladministration
3. Real social dislocation will come from over-densification in terms of private and public places and heat sinks/energy irresponsibility. Terraces will be under-serviced and discouraged
4. Value Capture will create two classes of living places and generations
5. Metros will use up so much capital that better technologies will be neglected, reducing proportional transit usage (cf Christie's 50% more by 2021)
6. The metro has chosen a technology that will inflict unnecessary financial waste on coming generations
7. Community cynicism will worsen, creating political instability and growing community rejection of conjoined agencies and commercial lobbies
8. The agencies involved will not be able to contribute positively once amalgamated councils exercise their base values – increasingly NIMBYism and fringe parties holding casting votes

Perhaps worst of all, the Bairdian generation is the first in Australia to seek to destroy earlier generations' earnest efforts to improve Sydney. JDF's lifetime commitment has been betrayed –

*Already, Sydney, like London, has spilt, "like a viscid bowl", its teeming populations over a great territory, with a continuous stream of men and houses all the way to Parramatta. What its future will be, we can only conjecture. But that it will be a great one who can doubt? [then] ... those who love Sydney (will) strive to the end (to ensure) that there shall be a competent municipal body created, whose duty it will be to direct the city of the future into its rightful path, to foster a civic spirit, to root out parochial prejudice, and bind all interests together in a common civic patriotism.*

That spirit has been replaced by commercial domination of public policy and budgetary processes. The "outcomes" point to failures at all levels of Government; and the lessons to be learnt from Bankstown, Epping, Parramatta, Surry Hills and Newcastle should be disseminated across societal, academic, political, business and environmental sectors.

Let not the Bankstown case study be an example of where Governments refused to acknowledge and adjust to "unintended consequences", once known, of their political decisions.

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