# Paradise revisited

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## 1. Introduction

This is an update on Sydney’s infrastructure puff piece saga.

The public was to be ‘consulted’ on the State’s draft transport and Sydney region plans until early December. Yet before it could comment, or bark, the transport caravan moved on.[[1]](#endnote-1)

The six-week consultation period proved too long a period for the NSW Government to resist making decisions undermining its own stated intentions. These were not the only events in the circus like atmosphere pervading NSW transport and infrastructure since the last article. But they comprise a convenient place to start.[[2]](#endnote-2)

## 2. Backtracks three

Three NSW Government decisions backtracking on the ideas of Future Transport and the Greater Sydney Regional Plan have come to light. They relate to Westconnex, toll roads, and Badgerys Creek.

### 2.1 Westconnex to the airport?

A first backtrack was rejection of a private sector – the only - proposal to link Port Botany and Kingsford Smith airport to Westconnex.[[3]](#endnote-3)

Readers might recall Westconnex reinvented to exclude the connections to the port and airport once held to be justifications for the project. To date this has not troubled the organisation which conducted an evaluation of the project.[[4]](#endnote-4)

With the links to the port and airport no longer part of Westconnex, it was right for the private sector to offer some solutions and allow the scheme to work more like intended. Lendlease made the ‘unsolicited bid’. With rejection of its proposal it is not clear what or when links will be made to the airport etc. The Government said the matter will be done in house.

Unsolicited bids can, in some cases should, be rejected for various reasons. In this case there were suggestions that fear of public reaction to even more tolls – new link, new toll - was among the reasons. Yet if the links are constructed the public will pay one way or the other.

The wags – who will feature in this article – say this is no concern. Even without new tolls to add to world class airport parking charges, the global leadership of NSW in private sector road charges will remain unchallenged.

### 2.2 Right idea, wrong rego

It is a short segue to a second decision: a car registration rebate for those paying more than $1300 a year in tolls. Benefits to relevant motorists: average $360. Cost to taxpayers: $100m.[[5]](#endnote-5)

After initial euphoria, questions turned to whether this is another over-reaction to reports about people suffering toll fatigue. It brought to mind a similar stroke by former Premier Carr; refunds for tolls paid on the M5. The refunds are still in place today.[[6]](#endnote-6)

That this is a major setback for road pricing, or just proper road charging, was overlooked.[[7]](#endnote-7)

If the Commonwealth had appointed an eminent person to oversee national road reform, the NSW policy reflex might have been slowed. But alas, like many things the Commonwealth could usefully do, the August 2016 promise of an eminent one has not some to pass. The wags say brave Sir Robin’s coat of arms would be better for Commonwealth transport than a kangaroo and emu.[[8]](#endnote-8)

An eminence, like The Rock, would have nominated a better target for a rebate. Trucks are presently double-charged. They pay through the national heavy vehicle charging system – up to $13,000 - and also pay tolls.[[9]](#endnote-9)

If there is to be ‘toll-relief’ it should be for trucks; to get them off local streets. Surely that looks better than a Premier saying she is trying to increase car use while ‘consulting’ on draft plans that aim to do the opposite?[[10]](#endnote-10)

NSW has a dubious answer on trucks too; forcing trucks to use the tolled ‘Northconnex’ once opened under threat of severe penalty. Presumably that doesn’t go for dangerous goods, as Northconnex is a tunnel.[[11]](#endnote-11)

### 2.3 Alienation

The third backtracking decision involves a housing release of land ‘earmarked’ for a rail corridor vital to Badgerys Creek airport and Sydney’s west.[[12]](#endnote-12)

The corridor was identified in an Infrastructure Australia ‘reform series’ report; the one that misdirected attention to a strange version of high speed rail. In contrast to resultant hyperventilation, there was little public comment about the report identifying a rail corridor north-south through Badgerys Creek which might be, or have been, the most important in Sydney.[[13]](#endnote-13)

The corridor protection report was released after NSW Government calls for the Commonwealth to butt out of transport planning since NSW has the ‘expertise’. Alert readers would remember this expertise forgot about an international airport in its backyard. Is NSW planning, responsible for the housing release, blessed with similar ‘expertise’?[[14]](#endnote-14)

Alienation of part of the corridor is further proof of conflict between transport and urban planning in Sydney. Even doubting Thomas would believe this; all can see the evidence, different maps in the recently released ‘consultation papers’.[[15]](#endnote-15)

More interesting is speculation the housing decision might also be aimed at sidelining Commonwealth interests; i.e. reducing the possibility of a north-south rail line. True or not, the fact of such speculation says something about the effectiveness of Government publicity in convincing people this is about the good of the community.[[16]](#endnote-16)

## 3. More

This time of year brings remembrance of the magi bearing three gifts to honour the divine; gold, frankincense and myrrh. The above indicates NSW made three gifts to the public consultation on its plans. The wags say only a saint could interpret the meaning of any of it.

As if to highlight the lack of divinity, recent weeks saw new NSW infrastructure chaos.

### 3.1 We will decide who arrives to park in Hornsby….

It started with the Hon. Phillip Ruddock, Immigration Minister during some Howard years, now mayor of Hornsby in Sydney’s north, blasting people from over the water – the Hawkesbury River - for parking in his shire.

One wag said it allows Mr Ruddock to replay a ‘fantastic job’ of enforcing a famous dictum; this time modified to deciding who arrives to park in Hornsby and the circumstances in which they park.[[17]](#endnote-17)

The press thinks the drive to Hornsby, park and catch the train phenomenon is due to lack of parking spaces at Central Coast stations.

Perhaps true, but could abominably slow and crowded trains also be a factor? Whatever the case, attention quickly turned from real life matters to the world of sports, or sports business.

### 3.2 Mother Hubbard’s kids or Schumpeter’s scion?

With beyond $50bn for Metro, Westconnex et al. to benefit affluent inner metropolitan dwellers who could blame NSW for having a bare cupboard when it comes to trains or car parks for the Central Coast or western Sydney?

So bare is the cupboard that silverware like the ‘Sirius’ building needs to be sold to scrape together $100m to help house the disadvantaged.[[18]](#endnote-18)

Perhaps nobody could have blamed the State Government if it channelled Mother Hubbard - until they heard news about its decision to demolish and rebuild two stadiums in Sydney at a cost of over $2bn. Initially presented ‘reasons’ included age, shortage of ladies toilets and some sort of risk of ‘losing’ a few football games to another city.[[19]](#endnote-19)

To transport observers, a familiar story. First heard? Via Cabinet leak. Options? None! In Sydney’s demographic east? Tick! A ‘crowning jewel’? Yes! Friday afternoon news? Made it! Worthwhile? Bagatelle - as shown by the astute remark: ‘*the Government still needed to assess whether (a retractable roof) would stack up financially’*.[[20]](#endnote-20)

In typical Sydney fashion, more emerged. There was talk about multi-million-dollar payouts to causes such as the NSW Waratahs rugby team or for ‘centres of excellence’ for NRL teams like the Sydney Roosters. A hastily organised petition against the decision quickly drew a large number of signatures; possibly a thousand *times* more than signatures in favour. Some articles and letters to the editor queried the merit of the approach.[[21]](#endnote-21)

Several infrastructure, business and media leader types hit back with new defences of the decision. Supplementary reasons included the cost being a ‘mere’ 1% of the State health and education budget – not just what is spent on school etc. building (which would make the comparative figure more like 15%) - but on teachers, doctors, nurses etc. too. Then there were threats to life and limb, the ‘*unusable and lifeless spaces around the perimeter*’ of the Olympic stadium, and the threat of Sydney being left behind something.[[22]](#endnote-22)

We were told the forthcoming west metro and light rail will ‘*drive patronage*’; unknowingly bringing smirks to the faces of old transport people who know about build-it-and-they-will-come scenarios and the sayings of a long-departed NSW Transport Director General.[[23]](#endnote-23)

But despite these efforts the tide seemed to be running out. The Premier herself again weighed in, this time claiming the stadiums generated $1bn per annum; sans public evidence, repeated by some, dismissed by others as a classic case of confusing averages with margins.

If some evidence of this amount is ever produced at least one commentator would shut up and others might proceed to interesting questions such as: where does the money come from - ticket, pie and beer sales?; where does the money go - to health and education budgets for example?[[24]](#endnote-24)

Speaking of which, the $1bn benefit claim was, perhaps unsurprisingly, followed by an argument that tearing down and rebuilding the stadiums – to create this benefit - would *‘help fund health and education services all over the state’*.[[25]](#endnote-25)

In true sporting tradition there was a super-Saturday, 9 December, when the press gave it considerable coverage.

Some journalists wrote about machinations and arguments among various Sydney sport and stadium supremoes, considering the Government’s decision a victory for some – whether it is a victory for the public was left largely unexplored.[[26]](#endnote-26)

Other articles put the Government’s decision as a victory for Sydney. Without the destruction and re-creation of the stadiums not only would Sydney and NSW be under threat of not hosting some football games, it would be imperilled by football itself; one article led with the headline *‘Failure to build new stadiums will leave NSW at the mercy of rival football codes’.* Mercy indeed from football clubs and codes! And do we hear ‘merci indeed’ from the infrastructure club?

Yet scholars were left disappointed; a rare opportunity to dust off the works of Joseph Schumpeter, he of the ‘gales of creative destruction’, was lost. Or perhaps not; presumably Schumpeter’s view about refreshed assets driving economic growth assumed the new capital stock would be extensively used.[[27]](#endnote-27)

Is this the case for new stadiums? The wags say football fans, who flock to mere suburban grounds like at Leichardt, Redfern or Kogarah, so far have stayed away from the stadiums in such droves they present a challenge to football telecasters; how to take a camera shot that doesn’t show up to 70,000 empty seats.[[28]](#endnote-28)

Maybe if the stadiums are to be demolished the people will come – that’s what happened at the old Cumberland Oval and there the crowd helped the demolition!

Maybe if they rebuild them people will come? Maybe people won’t come. Who knows? However, it does fill the papers and its only someone else’s money.[[29]](#endnote-29)

The beagle suggests the argy bargy could be overcome by reclassifying stadiums as ‘infrastructure’; surely this would remove all questions about merit? However, Jade, there are some differences.

One difference is the soon-to-be-demolished Olympic Stadium, at 17 years old, is a grand old dame compared with rail’s ephemeral starlets. It is more than twice the age of the soon-to-be-closed Epping-Chatswood line.

Another difference is there is no report – yet – of school students being offered lessons about how to promote the stadium demolition/rebuild.[[30]](#endnote-30)

To round-off the stadium saga to date, after praising Ms Berejiklian’s performance as Transport Minister and Premier, one sporty type claimed either the stadium decision will be reversed or she will lose office.[[31]](#endnote-31)

This is a big call. If the Government can get away with knocking down the Epping-Chatswood and Bankstown-Sydenham rail lines to rebuild them with less commuter capacity in a program costing at least $20bn, why would anybody complain about the same treatment for stadiums at a tenth of the cost? Truly our policy architects should be recognised as Schumpeter’s scion.

Stop press: stop worrying! The latest case for a new stadium at Moore Park (city) is it would be cheaper than refurbishing the existing one which would *‘not be able to operate in its current state within two years’* because of safety concerns. Presumably that means nobody would then be allowed in, rather than restrictions on crowd sizes. As the wags would say: what a relief! Knock both stadiums over and start building irrespective of cost or benefit! Forget the question of responsibility for how it this occurred; raised in a letter published in …. the Brisbane times. Just know this is: ‘*a key pillar* *in Rugby Australia's bid to host the 2027 World Cup’* and we will have a ‘*Twickenham of the south’.*[[32]](#endnote-32)

### 3.3 More metro

More was in store. The Government – as if a reincarnation of a previous Labor administration – *re-unveiled* a Parramatta-Sydney (West) Metro. Despite being ‘top priority’, its route and timing remain unclear.[[33]](#endnote-33)

Yet again, the publicity didn’t mention on-board seating – Metro lines (not just trains) have much less than Sydney Trains. Yet again, it had all sorts of information about tunnelling but omitted the only bits that matter: are the tunnels big enough to ever handle normal trains? do they prevent other rail tunnels in Sydney city?

Tucked away in the fine print was an ominous note; the much touted 30-Metro-trains-per-hour capacity is ‘*under the CBD’* i.e. not everywhere. If the Parramatta-Sydney Metro is to join the Sydney Metro – which goes to Bankstown – this implies each will be constrained to 15 trains per hour.[[34]](#endnote-34)

The Metro re-announcement attracted new speculation: was the motive to put another shot across the Commonwealth’s bows re rail in western Sydney? The reason: it might seem ‘natural’ to extend the Parramatta Metro to Badgerys Creek i.e. an east-west line rather than a north-south line. Natural but wrong; an extension would repeat and amplify the mistakes made with the airport line from Sydney to Kingsford Smith.

What of the joint Commonwealth-State ‘scoping study’ set up to look at the issues? Its report is more than a year late. For months both Governments have claimed to be finalising it; the public might see something …. eventually. Presumably after a decision has been made and comments and corrections can be ignored.[[35]](#endnote-35)

Meanwhile counter stories circulated; about the Commonwealth having a better grasp (than NSW) about the needs of western Sydney in general and the Badgery’s Creek ‘Aerotropolis’ (their word not mine) in particular.[[36]](#endnote-36)

Unfortunately, the Commonwealth Minister, the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP, conveyed the opposite to the local press when he ventured into the Badlands of the deep south-west. The message heard out there was: the only task is to get people from over his way – near the harbour - to the new airport and to build roads. Like NSW, he seemed to forget several million people already live in western Sydney - so annoying the locals the words ‘Royal Commission’ appeared in print.[[37]](#endnote-37)

3.4 Back in the real world

The State Government then claimed it had good news for those who actually catch trains, rather than just those who demolish, build or finance infrastructure. More services under a new timetable. The services were needed because of growth in ridership in the western suburbs. Also apparently needed were several after-the-event departmental statements praising this initiative.[[38]](#endnote-38)

It didn’t take long for less attractive elements to surface. These started with observations that old fleet – circa the Whitlam years – had re-entered service because the Government had not taken up the option of ordering more trains a few years ago. As if growth in the western suburbs was unexpected.[[39]](#endnote-39)

Then followed claims about the ‘need’ for some people to change trains to get to destinations such as Parramatta, supposedly one of the three cities. The Transport Minister, the Hon. Andrew Constance MP, said increasing interchanges were simply growing pains in a global city. A week or so later he said more seats are the priority for services from the Blue Mountains; apparently unaware of the conflict between interchanges and seating, or of the contrast between his remark and the proposal for a West Metro which will have less seating capacity per line than a commuter railway.[[40]](#endnote-40)

To his interchange quip he could have added ‘or people can drive’ – in which case there is no need to interchange. As in: ‘interchange or drive to Sydney University’.

Some Sydney University students formerly alighted at Redfern; formerly as it is no long a stop on some services from the western suburbs. They will need to interchange, drive, or find another University.

After Sydney University was bypassed by at least two planned Metros, the skipping of Redfern might have been expected to get an academic demerit. Then again those designing the timetable might not have thought much about it – both the University and Transport Department specialise in buses not trains. The Minister then corrected the University by noting – rightly – that many more trains would stop at Redfern. As ever in NSW transport, facts are rare and take a long time to come out.[[41]](#endnote-41)

Then came the ‘leak’; Sydney Trains punctuality etc. is supposedly at risk from the new timetable. The timetable reduces ‘recovery’ time; delays will cascade through the network and continue for long periods of time. As if on cue, soon afterwards a single ‘incident’ out in the suburbs led to delays throughout the network for two peaks and at least 12 hours.[[42]](#endnote-42)

As usual, the most curious parts of the leak escaped attention. One curious aspect was the ‘commercial in confidence’ classification of the leaked 52-page Sydney Trains document. Why such a classification? These don’t seem to be any commercial interests involved; rather the public – whose money is being used and whose travel is affected - have the critical interest in this information.

The Government has ordered investigations into previous leaks of supposedly sensitive transport information. As it takes classified documents so seriously it should investigate how this document became so classified; an important matter since misclassification would undermine the integrity of systems that protect really confidential information.[[43]](#endnote-43)

A second curious aspect was the document raising issues about the timetable was written by… Sydney Trains. Sydney Trains criticising its own timetable? Not quite. It appears the timetable was set by Transport for NSW.

Such an arrangement, typical for buses, would be unusual and probably misplaced in urban rail. However, it would help to explain how western suburbs growth seemed to be a surprise to the Government, as Transport for NSW does not actually run the trains. While consistent with confirmation bias – the department’s expertise has always been buses - it would be fascinating to see the safety case.[[44]](#endnote-44)

A third curious aspect is that for years changes to Sydney Trains operations have aimed at reducing the duration and transmission of delays; by sectorisation. The cost of sectorisation is some passengers need to change trains. The appearance here, of arguments to retain sectorisation but to undo its supposed benefit, is again of transport considerations being absent in Government policy.[[45]](#endnote-45)

## 4. The same old scene

### 4.1 The scene

It is an increasingly ugly scene for Sydney’s west.

The difficulties in the new rail timetable point to disastrous transport policy blunders – ignoring priorities. The transport priority for Sydney since the early 2000s was very well known to be the main west line. The priority was not the introduction of ‘Metros’, let alone Metros in suburbia and least of all Metros whose design may constrain the rail system.

The Government did not comprehend – or at least attempt to address – the west issue until recently. Even then it did not apparently understand – or act on – long held concerns about capacity expertly explained again by the Auditor General in April this year.[[46]](#endnote-46)

Is it too late to avert crisis? Ridership may become so high that the entire transport network periodically grinds to a halt. A west Metro, sometime, somewhere, and like Sydney trains capacity constrained because of earlier decisions, could be too little and too late.

In this context the ‘three cities’ idea – a hope that people won’t travel far - sounds like part of an excuse. That the regional and transport plans are contradictory, public consultation on transport was rushed, and the Government couldn’t even sit out two months before undermining its own plans hardly contradicts such a view.

With transport consultation closed, the public is now confronted by attempts to justify demolition and rebuilding of modern stadiums. The stadiums policy is a monumental distraction – the several billions of dollars in play there being but a small fraction of that for Metros. Yet it is eliciting a substantial adverse response from the public and one or two commentators with views such as *‘who stops this madness gets to be Premier’*.[[47]](#endnote-47)

Who knows what their thoughts would be if they examine the rail situation?

With this now, what when the pressure is on? When important rail lines are closed for months to turn them into a Metro with few seats, that doesn’t get to the city and might cause chaos at big stations like Chatswood. Just before an election.

The saying was ‘a week is a long time in politics’. A week is now also a long time in NSW infrastructure.

Sydney infrastructure policy, profitable to those on the great gravy train, is almost beyond the point of no return.

It looks like a circus without a ringmaster.

The Commonwealth should know its repeated boasts of a yet-to-be-disclosed ‘city deal’ put it in the Grand Parade of performers. There are reasons to fear what might be in such a ‘deal’. Non-disclosure of contents is one. Failure of the western Sydney rail scoping study is another. Yet another is the State’s attitude. Also concerning is the Commonwealth Government arrogantly assuming it has powers that sit with the Parliament.

Then there is the lack of visible support for the Commonwealth Government. Its once prominent adviser, Infrastructure Australia, went missing after hastily endorsing Sydney Metro in an extraordinarily flimsy report that effectively backed NSW on trust. It has not even commented on NSW possibly ruining the pivotal corridor it wanted protected.[[48]](#endnote-48)

### 4.2 A Prime Minister would…….

Does anyone think Prime Ministers like Keating or Howard would have tolerated what is being inflicted on Sydney? Or that that an Anderson or Albanese Ministerial size boot would not have been firmly - repeatedly - administered to bureaucratic and NSW backsides long ago?

My advice to the present Prime Minister as he nears the circus big top: grab the whip of well-informed public opinion before the only role left is for clowns.

Tell Minister Fletcher to step in now and stop the nonsense by ordering an independent inquiry to inform the public - if only to prevent attempts by NSW to further sideline his Government and set-up scapegoats.

### 4.3 Modern magi – two wise women

Perhaps this is an unhappy way to enter the season of goodwill, but on the darkest nights the stars shine most brightly. At the death knell of 2017 the best and the brightest – two wise women - came up with *the* brilliant idea. Despite all the woes, a gift to truly turn Sydney into transport paradise.

Congratulations to Dr Jennifer Kent and Professor Mulley who cogently etc. argue dogs should be allowed on Sydney public transport. 95% of relevant people agree – plebiscite and legislate that if you may! [[49]](#endnote-49)

While resisting barks such as ‘Metro suits them as they don’t need seats and can sit on the floor’ or ‘let dogs travel on dogs of projects’ the authors deserve at least a knighthood and a great big play bow. The professor’s inspirational spaniel merits a pat on the head.

Pets on pt? That’s the way they chase cats from the great kennel in the sky. A real reform to bring a piece of paradise to earth. Not some version of rugby heaven paid for by ordinary souls and much kinder than the beagle contemplated.

Furry Xmas.

J Austen

16 December 2017

1. The caravan literally moved on; part of the presentation of Future Transport was a Transport for NSW caravan tour of places in NSW. The author visited the caravan in Wollongong. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Paradise 1 and 2 at the jadebeagle.com. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/state-rejects-lendlease-bid-to-build-sydney-gateway-link-to-airport-and-port-20171025-gz8e6q.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. <http://www.thejadebeagle.com/wonderland-glory-and-evaluation.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/rego-cashback-for-sydneys-regular-toll-road-users-to-cost-state-up-to-100-million-20171120-gzoscw.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. The M5 cash back scheme attracts substantial local and leisure travel to the motorway. The Salvos Store at Milperra and a range of recommended fishing spots are a short distance from the motorway; use of the motorway can save a few minutes in getting from Liverpool to these spots. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. The registration rebate creates problems for road pricing and charging by: increasing the roads fiscal deficit; setting a precedent of rebates for road charges – the opposite to what road pricing and road charging intend. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. In August 2016, the Commonwealth Minister announced he would appoint an eminent Australian to lead road reform, including consideration of road pricing.

   Brave Sir Robin was a character in Monty Python and the Holy Grail; his coat of arms included a chicken. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jYFefppqEtE> [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. <http://www.thejadebeagle.com/rock-and-road-reform.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. In explaining the rebate, the Premier argued it was useful to reduce car traffic on local streets. The rebate could be expected to increase car use on tollways and in absolute terms; the opposite intention to that of Future Transport and the Greater Sydney Regional Plan which argued for decreases in car use. There also are suggestions the rebate could increase profits of toll road operators see: <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/rego-rebate-reveals-nsw-premier-is-switching-gears-into-election-mode-20171120-gzp037.html>, <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/drivers-who-spend-25-a-week-on-tolls-to-get-free-car-rego> [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Former NSW Roads Minister, Duncan Gay, stated that trucks would be required – under threat of penalty reported to be $630 - to use the Northconnex tunnel between the M2 and M1 instead of the current surface route, Pennant Hills Rd. See: <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/government-deciding-on-level-of-fines-for-trucks-that-fail-to-use-northconnex-20170918-gyjkaa.html>.

    Dangerous goods are not at present permitted in Sydney motorway tunnels; there are signs on tunnel portals to this effect. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. The Sydney Morning Herald reported release of land (for housing) that had been ‘earmarked’ for a railway to Badgerys Creek. See: <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/new-suburbs-drawn-on-the-western-sydney-map-near-badgerys-creek-airport-site-20171121-gzpoxc.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. <http://www.thejadebeagle.com/earth-to-canberra.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. <http://www.thejadebeagle.com/doubling-up.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. <http://www.thejadebeagle.com/future-transport.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Raised in <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/new-suburbs-drawn-on-the-western-sydney-map-near-badgerys-creek-airport-site-20171121-gzpoxc.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. ‘*But we will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come. And can I say on this point what a fantastic job Philip Ruddock has done for Australia’.* <https://electionspeeches.moadoph.gov.au/speeches/2001-john-howard>. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/sydney-harbour-bridge-the-limit-as-sirius-goes-on-the-market-for-development-20171206-gzzpg3.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-11-23/olympic-and-sydney-football-stadiums-demolished-and-rebuilt/9182798>, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-11-24/nsw-government-reveals-why-olympic-stadium-is-being-knocked-down/9187608>. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. <http://www.sportsbusinessdaily.com/Global/Issues/2017/11/27/Facilities/Sydney-Stadium.aspx>. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. *Secret contract shows millions in extra stadium cash*, Jacob Saulwick, Sydney Morning Herald, December 5 2017. The petition initiated by Mr Peter Fitzsimons, (see note xxiv [below]) was said to have gathered 140,000 signatures in 10 days.

    Centres of excellence: <http://www.smh.com.au/rugby-league/not-satisfied-with-outrageous-stadiums-largesse-now-nsw-government-wants-to-offer-40m-to-nrl-clubs-20171213-h046tb.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. As a percentage of health and education outlays:

    <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/2b-stadium-defence-slammed-as-relying-on-fantasy-figures-20171213-h03q6q.html>

    Unusable places?: *Opinion*, David Borger, Western Sydney director of Sydney Business Chamber, Sydney Morning Herald, December 7 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. David Borger, see note xxii (above). [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. The $1bn benefit figure is noted by Mr Fitzsimons as a central proposed justification in <http://www.smh.com.au/comment/premier-berejiklian-please-make-public-your-stadium-figures-20171211-h02e84.html>. It was repeated by Roy Masters (note xxv below) and Minister for Sport the Hon. Stuart Ayers MP, the former implying a comparison with the $2bn outlay i.e. An exceptionally short payback time.

    Mr Fitzsimons (correctly) noted that even were the benefit figure correct, it is incorrect to compare it with the outlays. What matters is the increase in benefits due to the outlays; would the entire $1bn be foregone if the stadiums were not rebuilt? Mr Fitzsimons also vowed to shut up if some proof of the $1bn claim is forthcoming:

    *‘I will shut up forever on the subject – no really, I am capable of it – if the government in general, and the Premier and Sports Minister in particular can back up the Premier's key claim that rebuilding the remaining stadiums at Moore Park and Homebush, will generate about $1 billion for the state's coffers, on an annual basis. "So if you actually take that assumption over two years," the Premier said, "we're paying back their cost."’* <http://www.smh.com.au/comment/premier-berejiklian-please-make-public-your-stadium-figures-20171211-h02e84.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. The headline ‘*Failure to build new stadiums will leave NSW at the mercy of rival football codes*’ and quotes ‘*help fund health and education services all over the state….*’ are fromRoy Masters*,* Sydney Morning Herald, December 9-10 2017*.*  Mr Masters also provided some views on transport infrastructure, claiming *‘Melbourne’s East-West link and Perth’s Freight link being cancelled because of electoral backlash*’. Perhaps the insight is true, but also perhaps his argument would have been better supported by reference to other projects: in 2014-15 the former project gave rise to epithets including a sporting analogy, the ‘wooden spoon’ of infrastructure <http://www.thejadebeagle.com/roads-1-tar-baby.html>; the latter was considered unsatisfactory by the Senate for reasons including its major justification, new port activities at Fremantle, could be moved elsewhere <https://johnmenadue.com/john-austen-and-luke-fraser-urbane-transport-police-part-3-of-3/> [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/the-sydney-stadium-wars-how-did-we-get-here-20171207-h014te.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. For example: <https://economics.mit.edu/files/1785>. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. Cumberland oval: <https://www.parraeels.com.au/news/2017/07/06/throwback--cumberland-burned-down/>

    Build it and they will come? <https://johnmenadue.com/graham-hand-no-gladys-build-it-and-they-will-not-come/> [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. <https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/school-students-asked-to-promote-sydney-metro-north-west-rail-network-during-lessons/news-story/bf2d7b95293b38b61ccf136f6ec29164>. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. *The Fitz files*, Sydney Morning Herald, December 9-10 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/the-case-for-a-new-stadium-at-moore-park-20171212-h03783.html>.

    The letter to the editor:

    <https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/politics/nsw/why-not-target-scg-trust-over-stadium-safety-issues-20171212-h039qp.html>

    Key pillar etc: <http://www.smh.com.au/rugby-union/nsw-goverments-stadium-upgrades-key-to-2027-rugby-world-cup-bid-bill-pulver-20171213-h04251.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/new-metro-rail-line-from-sydney-cbd-to-parramatta-highest-priority-for-state-20171122-gzqhbw.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. <https://www.sydneymetro.info/sites/default/files/document-library/Project%20Overview%20Sydney%20Metro%20West.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/new-suburbs-drawn-on-the-western-sydney-map-near-badgerys-creek-airport-site-20171121-gzpoxc.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/new-metro-rail-line-from-sydney-cbd-to-parramatta-highest-priority-for-state-20171122-gzqhbw.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. <http://www.macarthuradvertiser.com.au/story/5033948/rail-not-a-necessity-for-day-one-of-western-sydney-airport/>

    and Jeff McGill, *Toll roads, not rail?* Macarthur Advertiser, 15 November 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Several departmental statements: <https://transportnsw.info/moving-forward>; <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/more-trains-more-services>; <https://transportnsw.info/moving-forward/train> [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. *‘People are struggling’: passengers swelter in 1970s trains*, Kishor Napier-Raman, Sydney Morning Herald, December 5 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/andrew-constance-asks-for-patience-as-new-timetable-faces-peak-hour-test-20171127-gztk09.html>. The conflict between interchanges and seating arises because people need to leave their seats to interchange, increasing the probability of not being seated on some legs of their journey.

    Some big cities have interchanges between commuter rail and (normal) metros; metros operate for short distances in the inner city with standing room for passengers only, and commuter trains with plenty of seats operate from suburbs to the edge or through the inner city; Moscow is an example. The issue is that the variations in demand between outer and inner metropolitan areas are so great as to justify different rail systems in different areas.

    In contrast the NSW Government’s approach is for Metro to operate in and from the suburbs in an attempt to minimise interchanges. The Sydney City etc. Metro being constructed later than - and therefore as an extension of - the North-West Metro is an example; among its functions are that passengers no longer need to interchange at Chatswood.

    Also notable is that interchanges in Sydney occur in (distant) suburbs – for example Glenfield – where there is no substantial gradient in demand, and trains start their runs for other suburban areas rather than the inner city i.e. refuting the claim of necessity due to lack of track capacity in the inner city.

    Sydney is not among the world’s biggest cities ranking no.88 on one list; <https://www.worldatlas.com/citypops.htm>.

    The Government’s references to interchanges suggest fundamental misunderstandings of transport, and the fact of creating interchange on suburban trains – especially those wholly within suburbia - while minimising them on Metro appears perverse. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/transport-minister-andrew-constance-returns-fire-at-sydney-uni-over-train-timetable-changes-20171208-h01ixd.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. The leak: <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/revealed-sydney-trains-warns-timetable-overhaul-to-make-peakhour-delays-irrecoverable-20171129-gzv2t8.html>.

    The incident and delays: <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/sydney-trains-boss-says-no-turning-back-on-new-rail-timetable-20171212-h02z6y.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. Police investigation of leaks: <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/police-investigating-leaks-of-sensitive-documents-about-major-transport-projects-20170901-gy8wlv.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. Reducing operating margins and cascading delays may not matter as much to the executives in Transport for NSW as to those in the railways whose performance is judged by the last peak. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. See: <https://transportsydney.wordpress.com/tag/sectorisation/> [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/publications/latest-reports/performance/rail-punctuality/key-findings> [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. <http://www.smh.com.au/rugby-league/not-satisfied-with-outrageous-stadiums-largesse-now-nsw-government-wants-to-offer-40m-to-nrl-clubs-20171213-h046tb.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. <https://johnmenadue.com/john-austen-infrastructure-advice-worse-than-expected/> [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-12-11/why-we-should-be-able-to-bring-dogs-on-public-transport/9246020> [↑](#endnote-ref-49)