



PAUL FLETCHER MP

Federal Member for Bradfield
Minister for Urban Infrastructure and Cities

PDR ID: MC18-005097

Mr John Austen
9 Ayres Crescent
LEUMEAH NSW 2560

Dear Mr Austen

Rail Issues in Western Sydney City Deal

Thank for your letter dated 23 May 2018 to the Prime Minister, the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP about rail issues in the Western Sydney City Deal. As the matter raised falls within my portfolio responsibility, your letter has been forwarded to me for reply.

The Australian and NSW governments, and eight Western Sydney councils, agreed to a landmark Western Sydney City Deal on 4 March 2018. As part of the Western Sydney City Deal announcement, the joint Western Sydney Rail Needs Scoping Study Outcomes Report (the Report) was also released.

The Report identifies a preferred long-term rail network for Western Sydney which balances the needs of the region with the needs of the Western Sydney Airport (the airport). The preferred network includes the full North South Rail Link from Schofields to Macarthur via the airport, the East West Rail Link to Greater Parramatta, and a South West Rail Link Extension from Leppington to a Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis.

The City Deal includes agreement by both governments to each commit up to \$50 million for a business case on the full North South Rail Link to finalise the route, staging and station locations, building on the evidence base of the Report. The business case will also investigate the East West and South West rail links. The business case process is expected to be completed by 2020.

The City Deal also includes a centrepiece commitment from the Australian and NSW governments to deliver the first stage of the North South Rail Link from St Marys to Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis via the airport, with a joint objective of having rail connected in time for the opening of the airport.

I would like to address some of the substantive issues you raised in your letter. In particular, your concern regarding the potential for the North South Rail Link to be separated from the existing double deck suburban railway, and for the South West Rail Link to not provide a double deck service all the way into the airport.

Firstly, an important aspect of the North South Rail Link is providing connectivity for residents in Western Sydney with jobs in Western Sydney, supporting the City Deal objective of a 30-minute city. The North South Rail Link is being designed to connect people in places such as St Marys (and ultimately Schofields, Oran Park and the Campbelltown area) to jobs at the airport and new employment areas such as an Aerotropolis near North Bringelly.

This railway line is being designed to shape the development of Sydney's third city and is not being planned primarily to transport people for long periods from Western Sydney to the Sydney Central Business District (CBD). The Scoping Study identified a preferred network that included an East-West link to provide the direct connectivity to the eastern CBD in the longer term.

A second consideration is how we design trains to meet the needs of airport customers with luggage, an issue not satisfactorily solved with existing double deck trains to Sydney Kingsford Smith Airport.

A third issue is that working in partnership with the NSW Government on the Report, it was identified that there are critical capacity constraints on the existing suburban network, not only on the T1 Western Line but also on the Southern lines to which the South West Rail Link joined. These capacity constraints limit the ability to provide an effective service using double decker trains, integrated into the existing suburban network.

In regard to extending the South West Rail Link into the airport, we jointly identified with the NSW Government in the Report that this extension is a less viable option to provide direct access to the airport. This is due to a range of factors including forecast demand, constraints on existing T2 and T5 rail lines, and the reliability benefits of network separation. I also note that planning for the airport has made provision for two separate rail services (four tracks) on the airport for the North-South and East-West services.

The Report recommended the South West Rail Link would be most viable by providing connectivity to the airport via an interchange at the Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis. As part of the Western Sydney City Deal, governments have taken up this recommendation.

As you note in your letter, the choice of rolling stock is a key aspect of business case development. The business case will ensure that the final product meets commuter and airport customer needs.

I hope the information in this letter is of some help.

Yours sincerely



Paul Fletcher

10 / 8 /2018