



Greg Warren MP

SHADOW MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT
SHADOW MINISTER FOR VETERANS
SHADOW MINISTER FOR WESTERN SYDNEY
MEMBER FOR CAMPBELLTOWN

SENATE INQUIRY SUBMISSION

MANAGEMENT OF THE WESTERN SYDNEY AIRPORT PROJECT

GREG WARREN MP
NSW SHADOW MINISTER FOR WESTERN SYDNEY
NSW SHADOW MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT
STATE MEMBER FOR CAMPBELLTOWN

I write this submission to raise a number of relevant issues concerning the Western Sydney Airport project. As the NSW Shadow Minister for Western Sydney, the NSW Shadow Minister for Local Government, and the State Member for Campbelltown, I believe I am well placed to add substantial and informed comment regarding this inquiry. I have endeavoured to address the terms of reference as required when making a submission regarding any Federal Senate Inquiry.

Probity planning and management, risk assessment frameworks and management:

Transparency in relation to the planning process has no doubt been one of, if not the biggest, catalysts for this inquiry. As we have seen on multiple occasions with the Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis, the integrity regarding the planning process has been greatly compromised at a Commonwealth and State level. The transparency and justification for a number of planning decisions – including, but not limited to; routes, project timeframes; priority projects – has been next to non-existent at both a Federal and State level. Given the size, scope and importance of the Western Sydney Airport, it is imperative the government does not keep the public in the dark regarding processes and projects. The fuel pipeline is one example.



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Roads and Maritime Services (now under the umbrella of Transport for NSW) stated 42 b-double fuel trucks would be required to ship in fuel each day once the airport commenced operations. The same agency acknowledged the movements of the fuel trucks could: increase congestion; delays to freight corridors; and importantly, safety to other motorists on the local road network. An Infrastructure Australia document predicted the number of trucks would be 50 per cent higher than the RMS estimate – obviously increasing those potential risks. It's examples like this that have confused the public and exposed a lack of planning probity among the Commonwealth and NSW Government.

Land acquisition and related leases, including transactions related to the Leppington Triangle:

I – and my office – have spoken to a number of residents whose properties have been partially or fully acquired as part of the airport. The reoccurring theme is that the justification and reasoning behind the acquisitions – in many cases – has been unclear, despite multiple requests for greater clarification. Governments, and those representing them including public servants, must be held to account regarding major decision like land acquisitions. It is clear there has been a distinct lack of accountability regarding the acquisition process both at a Federal and State level. I am hopeful this Senate inquiry will lead to a similar probe of the NSW Government's culpability regarding decisions in relation to the Western Sydney Airport project.

The role and performance of WSA Co Limited:

The WSA Co was formed by the Commonwealth Government under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013, meaning it is a matter where the Commonwealth primarily has jurisdiction. That being said, it is important that WSA Co – and those employed at WSA Co – act with integrity and ensure proper process is followed regarding this project. The decisions WSA Co make ultimately impact residents not only in Western Sydney, but throughout the entire state of NSW.



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Site preparation, including the realignment of the Northern Road:

This overlaps with the second point on the terms of reference, however it is worth noting the importance of the Northern Road in relation to the Western Sydney Airport. With no rail line south of the WSA connecting the Macarthur region, local roads will be relied on heavily by those heading south from the airport – including drivers and passengers on board rapid buses.

There were also a number of land owners impact by the Northern Road upgrades – whether that be because their property was or wasn't acquired. We have seen questions marks raised regarding the acquisition processes so it is imperative those questions are answered by both governments.

Environment and heritage management:

Whilst we are looking towards the future regarding the Western Sydney Airport project, the past cannot be dismissed either. Once history is gone, it's gone forever so it's critical the environment and heritage near and around the WSA and aerotropolis were not, and are not, unnecessarily compromised.

Community engagement:

There is little doubt that both the Commonwealth and NSW governments have failed to adequately consult, communicate and engage with the community in Western Sydney. A project of this scale that will impact hundreds of thousands of residents needs to occur with adequate consultation, communication and engagement.

The community in and around the WSA and aerotropolis – including councils like Penrith, at time – have been left completely in the dark regarding major infrastructure plans and developments. Those, be it relevant Ministers at a Federal or State level, must be held accountable for their repeated blindsiding of the community.

Transport links and supporting infrastructure:

This is one of the major flaws of the WSA project. Of particular concern is the absence of a rail connection south of the WSA to the Macarthur region. With the



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growth in Campbelltown, Camden and Wollondilly local government areas, it defies belief that there will be no connection south of the airport when it opens in 2026. Alarming beginning of the planning stage alone for the vital rail connection could be up to 10 years away.

There are also issues with new and upgraded roads like the M12 Motorway – a priority road as stated by Infrastructure Australia – which is already two years behind schedule. No reason for this delay has ever been offered.

The plans for future schools and hospitals have also never been released to the public.

Training and employment:

Despite calls, both the Commonwealth and the NSW governments have refused to put any policies in place to prioritise local employers and employees as part of the WSA construction process. It is a once in a lifetime chance to give the local Western Sydney economy and its residents a huge boost – yet both governments have failed to make that happen.

Any related matters:

N/A
