

I wish to voice my opposition for the proposed design of the CSELR as described in the EIS.

My high level concerns

1. No genuine community consultation
2. Devonshire street is not capable of being the spine of the SE Network / not sustainable
3. A vastly superior alternative route has been identified – Foveaux sub-surface
4. Unacceptable noise levels, and times through a densely populated suburb
5. Trams running practically 24 hours a day thorough small suburban Devonshire Street
6. Speed of the light rail vehicles
7. Construction impact on small businesses and residents
8. Dislocation of Surry Hills
9. Loss of Amenity
10. Acquisition of 69 homes
11. Traffic congestion
12. Loss of trees
13. Impact on parklands
14. Access to properties along the route - businesses, residents, elderly and disabled
15. Significant devalue on properties along the route with no compensation from the Government
16. Loss of car parking
17. Road closures during and post construction

In summary – a unique internationally renowned village becoming a major traffic corridor, with no net benefit

Business case – lacking in facts and data

The government has failed to provide a business case for the project as has been promised. Local engineers have developed an alternative cut and cover proposal for Foveaux St that delivers greater capacity to add another line, prevents traffic issues with major intersections, less residential impact, increased speed for light rail vehicles that will decrease travel times, less visual impact on the local area and no long term noise impact for residents.

The Government proposed route involves the demolition of 69 homes, impact on parklands and trees. It will also have the light rail having the right of way over 5 major roads and 17 minor roads. The light rail respects the existing traffic flow along the South East route until it does a bootleg from the Stadiums, under Anzac Parade/Moore Park, across the Ed, and then on grade across South Dowling, Bourke, Crown, Elizabeth and Chalmers Streets. A local engineer suggests that Foveaux Street is the most direct route.

The current plan details less buses and a reduction in current bus routes. The proposed light rail will not take the capacity and there are no plans for customers that utilise buses on the routes that will be stopped e.g. Foveaux St.

This route has short term construction issues as with any route selected but less impact longer term as it does not impede traffic or residential amenity. The Foveaux St route would also add a station in the centre of Surry Hills rather than one that is a 5 minute walk from Central station. The current route is not a sustainable route and I cannot offer my support. As a fall back I would request the Devonshire St route be a cut and cover.

Community consultation – complete lack of community consultation by all levels of government

There has been no community consultation apart from a resident-forced “information” session where the minister advised we had no choice but to accept the route and offered an A3 flyer as proof this was the best route. The community are not seen as stakeholders in relation to this project and have never been consulted. This is inappropriate.

Noise impacts on residents

Surry Hills is a quiet residential neighbourhood with occasional noise from traffic passing through, weekend visitors to the cafes/ shops on offer, and infrequent groups passing by to attend events at the SFS. The increased noise from these occurrences are explicable and do not last long, hence they feed the life of the suburb. The light rail proposal will see light rail vehicles passing every 2-3 minutes in each direction, so effectively one every 60-90 seconds. This will see maximum noise of 75-83dB every time a vehicle passes. This is far in excess of the noises residents experience now. The acceptable noise levels have also been changed by the state government to match those of heavy rail. This is hardly fair on residents and means there is no evening noise level where you would expect noise to ramp down. Residents are now expected to deal with "daytime" noise levels up until 10:00PM. The light rail is also expected to run until 1AM. This is unacceptable and stark difference to the current living conditions of residents. We also understand the light rail vehicles may move all night to return to the opposite end of the line or for repairs. Again this is a very different prospect that is unfair to Surry Hills residents who enjoy a quiet suburban lifestyle despite being close to the city.

The noise levels for Surry Hills as measured by TfNSW were taken outside of a local pub. This is unacceptable as the premises in question has loud live music nights, salsa dancing and trivia nights with the windows open. This is not a fair representation of the usual amenity for locals. Residents have also been advised they will be unable to install high, solid fences, double glazing, nor will there be any sound barriers. This is unacceptable, and TfNSW should bear this cost. Trains should also cease at 11:30PM. To reduce noise I also request trains be limited to 20KM per hour whilst traversing through this quiet, residential area, plus a continuous rail line to reduce noise at expansion joints and the maximum noise reducing beds be installed below the tracks.

Visual impact and loss of trees/ parklands

I am concerned with the large volume of trees that will be removed along the route and in the parklands. There will also be a loss of parklands both following and during construction. Many people in the area either live in apartments or have very small yards. This loss of green space will hugely impact their living standards and wellbeing. All parklands should be replaced 1:10 with improvements.

There will be a large number of overhead cables introduced under the current plans. We request these cables (along with electrical cables) be placed underground to reduce the visual clutter and enable trees to be planted to replace those being cut down, in effect making Devonshire Street a completely tree lined street, blocking out the visual and noise impacts of the light rail.

Residents in Surry Hills rely on parks and open space. Many properties have either a small or no yard, and require open space for health and fitness, for relaxation, for children to play, to exercise pets and for recreational sports.

Safety

Safety is a consideration in this built up area as; Devonshire Street has numerous licensed venues, there are 2 child care centres on Devonshire Street, a school on Bourke St, access required to the church for weddings/ services/ funerals, and 1,000 residents of Northcott building.

The safety issues need to be fully reviewed by independent consultants and the full reports made available. The trains must be restricted to a maximum of 20kmph through this section.

Parking

In an area where parking is at a premium, Surry Hills already has serious parking issues. The rail project looks to remove a further 155+ just on Devonshire Street alone. Whilst we wish to reduce reliance on cars, many residents do need them for work and family life. If the rail project is to proceed we request Resident/Commercial Only spaces in selected areas and temporary parking

permits for the occasional visitors of residents and also for tradespeople. This allows those that have a genuine need to park in the area - residents and businesses - greater access to dedicated parking. In Surry Hills where are the 23+ special parking zones to be placed? How are people ever supposed to get items delivered if there is no street access. You can't surely just advise that there will be space around the corner, when in fact you are making it more and more difficult to find any parking what-so-ever. This is not acceptable; in fact this is beyond a joke. I need access out the front of my house on Devonshire Street for vehicles to park and drop off my deliveries. These trucks can be very large sometimes and being able to find parking elsewhere may be too difficult. How are the 7 pubs on Devonshire Street supposed to get food & beer deliveries if they can't stop outside the pubs as they do now to drop off these items. This is one of the most ill-conceived and mismanaged projects I have ever come across.

Traffic

The Devonshire route crosses a number of major arterial roads. It is planned that the trams will have uninterrupted priority at all crossings. Indications are that at peak times, when the roads are their busiest, there will be a 45m train every 2-3min in each direction. A simple calculation means that a train will cross the arterial road approximately every 90 seconds. The trains are stated to be doubled in length when there are events at the Sydney Cricket Grounds and Sydney Football Stadiums, thus reducing this gap. The number of vehicles that can then cross-junctions at South Dowling, Bourke, Crown, Elizabeth and Chalmers, will be significantly reduced and access between the city and the South severed! The frequency of trains should be limited to a minimum of 10 minutes to ensure a suitable gap to allow pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles to cross in safety. TfNSW has offered no resolution to the traffic problems that will be caused by the light rail.

Loss of homes

This route see the loss of at least 69 homes with people unable to buy back in the area they have made their home. Many residents are elderly and will not cope with the stress of this type so late in their life. The value of other residences and commercial buildings along the route will also be devalued with some residents already finding they are unable to sell their home due to the stigma of being on a major transport corridor. If this project was to proceed those residents should be compensated for the loss of value.

Businesses

TfNSW claim they have spoken to all businesses along the route however this is not correct and many businesses claim they have never been consulted. TfNSW advertised figures show only 100 businesses along the entire route have been surveyed. There are over 60 along Devonshire St alone and the impact on these businesses will be immense with many not being able to survive the construction period alone. Cafes and restaurants will have difficult time as the streetscape and amenity will be changed permanently with customers not wishing to sit to "enjoy" a meal with noisy trains going past at 75-83dB. These businesses residents form the heart of Surry Hills and this will ruin the suburb.

Alternative Routes

Putting the light rail on Campbell Street, Surry Hills, which is a much wider street and already an existing traffic corridor makes much more sense than small Devonshire Street. Campbell Street would run up to Taylor Square where a large stop could be built for those wishing to shop on Oxford Street or go to any one of the numbers pubs & restaurants. The trams would then run with the traffic (unlike it running against the traffic in the proposed EIS) down Flinders Street and then end up joining the existing bus corridor on Anzac Parade. There would be no cutting through traffic and causing monumental traffic congestion like the proposed route will definitely do.

Requests:

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If the project is to proceed we request that:

The LRV's are no longer than 29m long if traveling through residential areas at the surface level. If the LRV's are longer than 29m, then they are only to travel along specifically tailored routes (such as a sub-surface or tunnel) and or dedicated rights of way (not on residential streets).

Speed to be reduced to **20km** from South Dowling Street to Elizabeth Street

Operational times through Surry Hills must be limited to 05:30 to 23:30

No light rail movement between 23.30 and 5.30

Frequency limited to a minimum of 10 minutes gap of both LRV's

Noise and vibration levels delivered well below the EPA guidelines

Continuous rail to reduce noise at expansion joints to be used between South Dowling Street to Elizabeth Streets

Maximum noise reducing rail tracks to be installed and noise reducing beds be installed below the tracks

The rail base to be constructed in a way that limits vibration

Significant screening in residential areas must take place

All parklands should be replaced 1:1 with improvements on facilities

The Government has suggested they will replace trees 1:8 – this should be enforced with a at least 1:10 in the Surry Hills area with an avenue of trees along Devonshire Street to completely block out the light rail vehicles visually and mitigate the 83dB LRV pass bys every 60-90 seconds.

Light rail and electrical cables to be placed underground to reduce the visual clutter and enable trees to be planted to replace those being cut down

All substations must be below ground

Those residents financially impacted by the development of the light rail should be compensated for the loss of value; including acquisition and properties along the route affected.

Genuine consultation with business owners and operators about the construction of the light rail, with immediate support in the event of an incident.

Compensation to business for loss of income due to the construction and long-term impact of the light rail.

The frequency of LRV's should be limited to a minimum of 10 minutes to ensure a suitable gap to allow pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles to cross in safety

Resident/Commercial Only spaces in selected areas and temporary parking permits for the occasional visitors of residents and also for tradespeople. This allows those that have a genuine need to park in the area - residents and businesses - greater access to dedicated parking.

The safety issues need to be fully reviewed by independent consultants and the full reports made available

The company who wins the tender must agree to maintaining the light rail tracks and LRV wheels to best practices to ensure the least amount of noise is emitted from the contact of the 2 surfaces – particularly in residential areas

Soundproofing – those residential areas that are heavily impacted to have double glazing and new solid wood front doors to help mitigate sounds and loss of amenity as part of the project and paid for by TfNSW.

Future option of having the NSW Government build a 2m high wall along Devonshire Street in front of all the residential terraces to mitigate sound and also act as a privacy barrier as there are potentially 18,000 people per hour passing only a few metres from our lounge room window and bedroom windows. This will help to ensure we maintain some privacy.

A Foveaux Street sub-surface route was quickly discounted by TfNSW but there was no evidence provided by them why it was discounted. As it would be sub-surface it would mean the LRV could run at 80kph not the slower speeds it needs to in a residential area.

Also I believe the proposed light rail track is not capable of transporting 9,000 people per hour as the tracks will not handle this. If this is the case how can this even be looked at being implemented when it will fail from day 1?

What compensation is being offered to those who live on Devonshire Street whose property values will plunge during and after construction. We didn't buy at the end of an airport runway and then complain about the noise. Devonshire Street is a small, quiet suburban street. This will completely destroy the amenity of the street and the value of everyone's property. This is not acceptable, so what compensation will be offered? We have had a registered valuer provide his report and he advised that our property will reduce in value by 30% as a result of the light rail being less than 6m from the front of our property and loss of on street parking.

The Government has suggested they will replace trees 1:8 – this should be enforced with a at least 1:10 in the Surry Hills area, and in fact more along Devonshire Street to make an avenue of trees to block out the light rail visually and also reduce the 83dB noise level as the light rail goes along the street.

I request that the light rail power lines and other electrical cables along Devonshire Street be placed underground to reduce the visual clutter and enable trees to be planted to replace those being cut down. All other power poles should be removed.

All substations must be below ground

Sydney needs heavy rail moving a lot of people. The extension of the Bondi Junction line, which already exists to Maroubra, could solve this issue and not affect homes or traffic as it is already underground. Why has this not been thought of and implemented? I would prefer my tax payer dollars going to a system which is future proof, can be implemented relatively quickly as it already exists, and would benefit a rapidly growing Sydney.

