

Submission for The Albion Park Rail bypass

I live very close to the Croome Road Sporting Complex, in Gumnut Street, and my submission relates primarily to that immediate area.

Although the EIS is very comprehensive, there's a lack of clarity, for the layperson, on the new road and the supporting infrastructure's position, particularly in relation to existing road and land levels. I accept that in some of the cross sections this is indicated, however, in critical areas, close to residents, this is not so obvious. In respect to the Croome Road/East West Link road area, where there are a lot of planned works very close to residents, there's just not enough detailed information.

Following are my particular concerns and their possible impact on local residents, landscape and flora.

1. The new round-about on Croome Road.

This has been planned east of the current alignment of Croome Road, bringing this piece of infrastructure closer to residents and changing the current alignment of Croome Road to the north of the round-about (which requires the removal of old, well established native trees that help to form a visual and sound barrier to the Croome Road traffic). Also, this easterly positioning moves the *elevated* Croome Road Bridge (BR12), closer to residents and impacts on the current character of Croome Road, removing its gentle curves through a wooded area just north of the Croome Sporting Complex entrance.

I propose that the position of the round-about is reconsidered, so the road alignment remains in its current position. I understand that this may impact on construction logistics and traffic management but the neighbouring residents are here for years to come and a little inconvenience for others, in the short term, is a small price to pay.

Local residents have, over recent years, been impacted by the construction of the East West Link Road (the area was rolling hills, with horses and other grazing livestock). If there is any way to ease the impact of all this new infrastructure, then it should be seriously considered.

2. The new Croome Bridge (BR12) and adjacent road.

As mentioned in Point 1, the proposed new alignment of Croome Road moves the bridge closer to residents. By maintaining the current alignment of Croome Road, it would keep the bridge that much further away. The road from the new round-about to the bridge and on to the northern side of Croome Road will now be elevated to meet the required height over the new by-pass, well above Croome Road's current level (ref. Design & Landscape Character Strategy Page 74, Diagram 21), increasing both visual and noise pollution to local receivers.

To help reduce this increased noise and visual pollution, I request consideration of the following:

- a. Maintaining the current alignment of Croome Road, to push the bridge infrastructure further away from local residents.
- b. Noise barriers installed along the eastern side of the bridge and elevated section to the north along Croome Road. Although noise barriers add to the visual pollution, I would rather the 24/7 noise pollution be reduced at the expense of the occasional visual blight.

c. The Croome Road surface from the new round-about to the northern extreme of construction, be treated with “quieter pavement”.

3. The new East West Link Road.

From the new round-about on Croome Road heading east, the new East West Link Road is positioned up the hill and, looking at the EIS diagrams, it appears to be elevated with fill material at this point. Vehicles accelerating and decelerating as they approach/leave the round-about, will throw additional noise pollution across to local receivers.

I propose that some noise mitigation measures be taken:

- a. Construction of an earth mound on the northern side of the East West Link Road at this point.
- b. Quieter Pavement along the full length of the East West Link Road, given its elevated position. (It seems strange that the by-pass is to have quieter pavement along this section because of the close proximity of residents but the busy East West Link Road does not).

4. Proposed Noise Barrier along the By-pass.

The EIS shows a “proposed” noise barrier along the East West Corridor, to the north side of the road. The use of the word “proposed” is a cause for concern as this should be a minimum requirement, given the road’s close proximity to residential properties. Having visited one of the drop-in sessions and viewed the interactive 3D display, it is unclear (and my query could not be answered) if the by-pass behind Gumnut Street was cut in lower than the existing East West Link Road.

It looked like there was a built up embankment with the noise barrier atop. Is this correct? I would like some clarification regarding this.

5. Recreational area north of the East West Link Road (Landscape Character Zone 10 – Southern APR, EIS Page 420)

Ref: 14.1.12 Visual Impact Assessment

It is unclear as to how much additional planting will be carried out to shield views of the proposed noise barrier along the by-pass. Page 425 of the EIS states that sensitivity is “low” because of the “relatively high density vegetation”, but this is dependent upon where a resident lives along this long stretch of land and all is not equal for every resident. There is also the issue of the inevitable graffiti that will be adorned on the barrier and some mitigation of this should be implemented.

I propose that an intensive planting strategy be undertaken ASAP, to give the plants a chance to establish themselves prior to construction being undertaken. Many of the trees that council planted, when the current East West Link Road was constructed, have either died or grown so high that they are no longer effective in screening the road or acting as a noise buffer. A lesson should be learnt here and suitable planting must include trees and lower level bushy plants.

Secondary planting should be carried out, once the barrier is in place, along and against the barrier to add to the screening of the barrier and mitigate the likelihood of graffiti.

6. Noise Pollution Monitoring.

This section of the EIS was very technical and involved. I was surprised that the nearest noise monitor to the location of so many proposed works and new infrastructure was in Oak Street.

Why wasn't there one in a more realistic position, say in the recreational area behind Gumnut Street? More noise testing should be carried out from that area.

7. Noise Treatment.

Receivers in Gunmut Street, especially those along the south side, are going to be extremely affected by the by-pass and the other supporting infrastructure. Not only do we have the by-pass <100m away but there's the new East West Link Road up the hill; an elevated bridge close by; a new round-about construction; Croome Road realigned closer and 2 proposed construction compounds (AS12 & AS13) just behind our properties.

Receivers will be seriously affected by major noise and dust during the extended construction period, with continued noise pollution after completion.

The new by-pass sweeps around from the west and passes behind homes to the south of Gumnut Street. These properties (families) will be more affected when winds are coming from the west and around to the south-east, as noise and air pollution will be pushed towards these homes.

To this effect, house "noise treatment" solutions should be looked at much more closely than outlined in the EIS. More consideration should be given to those properties on the south side and westerly end of Gumnut Street.

During the construction period, could earth mounds be constructed along the north side of the East West Corridor to protect receivers from noise, as the existing planting is ineffective?

8. The Green Meadows Detention Basin.

The EIS states that the Green Meadows Detention Basin's current status will be preserved. There is now a chance to improve on its current status and this should be looked at for future needs as historical "1 in 100 year events" are becoming more regular.

9. Air Quality.

Having experienced the amount of dust created when the current East West Link Road was constructed, I feel that air monitors should be located along the recreational zone to the north of the East West Corridor. With the earthworks and construction of the Croome Road round-about, the Croome Road Bridge, new East West Link Road and By-pass, all in close proximity, receivers will have an extended and intense exposure to dust. This could prove to be a health hazard and detrimental to other aspects of life and property. There will also be a lot of heavy machinery in use, causing pollution from diesel exhaust particles (dependent on wind direction).

10. Ancillary Sites AS12 & AS13

These 2 sites have obviously been placed where they are because of the number of construction projects in the immediate area, taking in the Croome Road round-about, the Croome Road Bridge, the new East West Link Road and the re-alignment of Croome Road.

It seems unfair that nearby residents, not only have all these construction projects close by but we will also have to endure the additional truck & heavy machinery movements, associated noise and air pollution. The ancillary sites have become a multiplier of disturbance.

I propose these 2 ancillary sites should be combined and either moved further east, along the East West Corridor or into the Croome Road Sporting Complex. These sites will produce noise and air pollution from engines starting up, reversing alarms, workers talking/shouting, dust etc. Consideration should be given to relocating AS12 & AS13.

11. Extended and Out of Hours Work.

Due to the close proximity of the by-pass to receivers along the East West Corridor, I request that extended hours and OOHW not be carried out on any of the following:

- Croome Road Round-about
- Croome Road realignment
- Croome Road Bridge
- New East West Link Road
- By-Pass in East West Corridor

Also, that Ancillary Site AS12 & AS13 are not used in relation to works in other locations, outside of standard working hours.

12. Flightpaths of Aircraft.

Once the by-pass is completed, will this affect the flight path of aircraft taking off and landing at the Illawarra Regional Airport? Currently, most aircraft fly along the East West Corridor. Wouldn't this be a poor option once the by-pass and new East West Link Road are in operation?

Aircraft flying overhead at low altitude are a distraction for drivers and it can also raise other safety issues. As part of the planning process for this proposed project, would it not be a good idea to include proposals for future flight paths, moving aircraft, both fixed wing and rotary, away from the East West Corridor and residential properties?

Summing up.

The amount of construction works, additional infrastructure and the future increase in traffic in close proximity, impacts highly on the residents of Gumnut Street and adjoining properties.

It should be a high priority for the RMS and Shellharbour Council to carefully consider the planning and mitigation measures incorporated into the project. Please remember that residents are here 24/7, 365 days a year. It looks like much planning and care has been taken regarding the impact to the Croome Road Sporting Complex, where users are probably only there a few hours each week. More consideration should be afforded to neighbouring residents, even if that means costs increase. Money should not be a consideration where the health, wellbeing and financial impacts on residents is concerned.

Summary of points raised:

- New infrastructure height levels in comparison to existing levels.
- The re-positioning of the Croome Road Round-about (it should be kept in line with current line of Croome Road).
- The re-alignment of Croome Road (it should follow existing route).
- Confirmation of noise barrier and construction levels, along the by-pass in the East West Corridor.
- Noise protection measures along the east side of Croome Road from the new round-about to the northern end of construction (noise barrier and quieter pavement).
- Additional planting in recreation area on the north side of East West Corridor.
- Noise mound on the north side of the new East West Link Road from the new Croome Road round-about.
- Quieter Pavement installed on the new East West Link Road.
- Construction hours limited to normal work hours on all projects in close proximity.
- Install a *construction noise mitigation mound* along East West Corridor.
- The relocation of Ancillary Sites AS12 & AS13.