

CBD and South East Light Rail (CSELR) EIS Modification Submission 16th December 2014

My concerns about the Modified Environmental Impact Statement for the CBD and South East Light Rail project as exhibited in December 2014 include the route proposed through the South East, and the **extraordinarily large size of the Light Rail Vehicles (LRVs) proposed.**

I note that the proposed changes to the CSELR project will:

- result in an increase in light rail vehicles from 45m to the worlds largest at 67m in length. This will increase noise impacts including residential areas such as Devonshire Street, Wansey Road and High Street, increase the timing of LRVs to travel across intersections and potentially put peoples lives at greater risk along the route;
- result in a decrease in previous forecast peak capacity given the number of light rail vehicles per hour will be decreased from 20, to 15;
- result in significant reduction in peak hour public transport capacity to and from the South East compared to the existing bus services;
- result in the loss of substantially more established and significant trees in Centennial Park;
- result in significant encroachment and utilisation of historic Centennial Parklands through the constructions of a 3 metre high, 300 metre long retaining wall along Alison Road together with a light rail stop in the park;
- increase risk of water issues through the raising of existing storm banks (dam walls) with no study on overflow and impacts evident;
- disrupt and cause to be re-located existing cycle ways connecting Randwick, POW Hospital and UNSW to Centennial Parklands, the CBD and greater metropolitan Sydney;
- result in the removal of High Cross Park space;
- remove access to Centennial Park from Alison Rd to the Main Gate in Daley Road. Likewise Daley Road access to Alison heading west is unworkable;
- not address many of the critical concerns the stakeholders and community have documented to TfNSW with regards to the design and impact of this project.

I continue to object to the CSELR project.

I am concerned that financial justification of this costly project continues to be withheld by the government. The management of the light rail project has simply failed to respond to the literally hundreds of professional and community submissions regarding the Environmental Impact Study for the project, and subsequent communications.

I am concerned at the opinion of independent transport analysts that the peak capacity of the CBD and South East Light Rail will be less than existing bus services – and that it will never meet the demands of the vastly increased population projected for Sydney's south east.

I am worried that the government committed itself to the CBD and South East light rail without adequate study. This is reflected in the reported cost blowout from \$1.6 billion to \$2.2 billion as well as the recent dramatic increases to the size of carriages. The vehicles will now be 67 metres long; that's almost as long as a jumbo jet and twice the length of Melbourne's new E-Class trams. No western nation operates 67-metre trains on public roads. Such trains are usually relegated to segregated train tracks.

I am horrified at the likely effect of the light rail on the amenity of the south east, particularly the loss of trees and parkland, and the project's adverse impact on businesses along its route as well as the medical facilities in High Street, Randwick.

Here are some **of the other threats** revealed by government documents:

- **Reduces peak-hour capacity of public transport capacity in the South East** through removal of, or changes to, bus services such as the 372; 373; 374; 375; 376; 377; 395/396; 343; 397; M10; M50; 391; 392; 393; 394; 399; L94.
- Compared to current bus services, the CSELR offers an intimidating combination of **much longer distances between stops, far fewer seats**, and will force many travellers **to change between a tram and a bus one or more times**.
- The light rail project will **obstruct the ONLY arterial road**, Anzac Parade, connecting six southeastern suburbs with the CBD.
- **67-metre long light rail vehicles will have right-of-way** across South Dowling, Bourke, Crown, Elizabeth and Chalmers streets.
- Anzac Parade and High Street will become **24-hour clearways** – no bus lanes, no parking, and no stopping.
- Almost **1,000 car spots and 1,000 trees will be removed**.
- **Access to health services and retailers will be significantly reduced**.
- The CSELR has been given double the normal margin above 'background noise levels' compared to virtually any other project or development in NSW.
- Industry experts have told the Government that the design of the CSELR does not match the heavy demand it will face. They complain it is being done **in isolation rather than as part of an integrated, far-reaching light rail network**. They suggest it is **designed to fail because it will be at capacity from the time it starts operating, and is therefore not future proof**.
- The government did not examine other public transport solutions such as heavy rail or improving the existing bus system.

While Transport for NSW has consulted widely about some impacts of the project, the process has been mere hype and genuine community concerns have been ignored.

In fact I am advised that TfNSW are in violation of the Terms of Reference for the Sydney Light Rail Community Reference Group. It has come to my attention that the minutes from the meetings are not an accurate record and that TfNSW are assuming editorial control.

The community was given an ultimatum and the project was a *fait accompli* from the initial announcement. We need future-proof, integrated and improved public transport solutions – all of which this project fails to deliver.

I respectfully call upon you to **STOP THIS LIGHT RAIL PROJECT**.

Regards



Venietta Slama-Powell
Local resident and Convener – People Unite Surry Hills