

# Submission on CBD and South East light rail modifications report

Department of Planning and infrastructure  
Transport for NSW

Dear Sir,

The project has been declared a State Significant Infrastructure Project so we have learned that any objections will be ignored by Planning and Environment, but the project will have such an impact on the future of Sydney that we must continue to raise objections to the preposterous proposal.

Many objections to the EIS were lodged about the dangers to children and adults to having an open platform 45 metres long adjacent to Ward Park. Increasing the platform length to 67 metres makes this so much worse.

The platform at Ward Park is astride the established pedestrian movements along Riley Street. It is callous to expect pedestrians and tram passengers to divert to crossings at Marlborough Street and west of Little Riley Street. This will not happen and the length of the trams and the curvature of the tracks make it impossible for someone crossing behind a tram moving out of the platform to see a tram approaching from the other direction.

The length of the trams ensures that pedestrians at all the pedestrian crossings at Central Station are blindsided to trams entering and leaving the Chalmers Street stop. It is physically impossible for pedestrians leaving the Devonshire Street tunnel to see a tram leaving the Chalmers Street stop when a tram is pulling into the stop. They face being run down by cyclists and pushed in front of the trams.

It is not known if trams will have priority over pedestrian movements across Chalmers Street and Eddy Avenue which are now coordinated with traffic phases. The never-exhibited EIS stated that the phases at the critical Foveaux Street intersection would be reduced so pedestrians crossing here would have vehicles turning left from Foveaux Street from the beginning of the phase. If trams have priority they will be stranded on a pedestrian island and broadsided by bicyclists as the trams pass through. They are blindsided to trams approaching from the overpasses at Eddy Avenue when crossing the tracks from Central Station if they walk behind a tram leaving Chalmers Street.

Buses from the south in Elizabeth Street will be trapped at the bus stop south of Foveaux Street by vehicles queued at the intersection which the never-exhibited EIS concedes will be congested for much of the day.

The EIS had deliberately contradictory "indicative figures" for the design of the Rawson Place stop. The design shown in "Technical Papers" by Booz & Company and released to City of Sydney in construction diagrams, proposed bus pick up stops in George Street. Parsons Brinckerhoff appear to have abandoned this plan forcing passengers of bus services from the Inner West terminated at Pitt Street to have a long walk to transfer to and from a George Street tram. It will be a lot quicker and safer to transfer to a City Circle train using the Devonshire Street Tunnel, as at present. Apart from Chinatown stop the trams now will stop only adjacent to train stations.

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Even with the abandonment of bus stops in George Street it will be physically impossible for a 67 metre tram to avoid crashing into a stationary tram at the Rawson Place stop waiting the cross Pitt Street when the driver first sees it. This makes it imperative for the spacing for the dispatch of trams from Circular Quay to accommodate the worst-case scenario where a tram that is delayed at every intersection is followed by a tram that has a clear run. The LRV service frequencies claimed in Table 3.2 are fanciful and show a casual indifference to human life of everyone living south of the Harbour. The notes reveal that the frequencies of services were set in order to be “consistent with Transport for NSW customer service obligations” and are not based on any analysis of traffic flows through the various intersections. The RTA had engineers that produced the world-renowned SCATS system and they can’t all have resigned in disgust. It is imperative that competent engineers be allowed to make a realistic assessment of the necessary headways to avoid a catastrophe at Rawson Place that would lead news bulletins round the world. If TfNSW no longer has competent engineers it could commission Skyhigh traffic management. Elementary assessments based on existing traffic flows establish that the frequency of services on day one would be far less than that claimed in the tables and figures 3.10-13 and the frequencies that can safely be achieved by the trams would inexorably decline over the future life of the City of Sydney.

The LOS calculations in the EIS and this document are infantile and nothing has been disclosed about the underlying assumptions.

The third rail wire free infrastructure has been abandoned in European cities because it is considered to be unsafe. I would object to it being used in pedestrianised zones.

I objected in my submission to the EIS to buses and trams sharing lanes in Centennial Park and across the Gardeners Road intersection based on the differences in stopping distances between railed vehicles and rubber-tired vehicles and the fact that buses turn up at intervals that are not related to the headway of the trams. Clearly the increased length and weight of the trams makes this a much greater concern.

The degradation in frequencies of tram services makes it much less likely that bus passengers will voluntarily transfer to trams. TfNSW has said that buses that transfer passengers to trams at the Kingsford terminus will be terminated at Todman Avenue without indicating how the buses would physically turn around. If they, presumably, are forced to make a right-hand from Anzac Parade they face being run down by trams – it is physically impossible to make this turn without encroaching on the tram alignment. The consequences and the trauma experienced by students and parents at Kensington Primary School will be that much greater with longer and heavier trams.

The degradation in frequencies of tram services and the increased distances that bus passengers have to walk to transfer between buses and trams at Rawson Place will make it more likely that bus passengers will catch buses the deposit passengers in Eddy Avenue to transfer to City Circle trains. So you have the double whammy of buses travelling on empty to Circular Quay through the pinch point between the Old Supreme Court Building and the St James Centre and trams travelling on empty to Circular Quay along George Street. It can be demonstrated readily that the George Street trams will

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cause intractable congestion in Elizabeth Street and also in Druitt Street. The consequences for the efficacy of public bus services have not been competently assessed.

There are no bus stops in front of Town Hall except for a set-down-only stop for some Victoria Road bus services. The majority of Victoria Road and all Inner West bus services use bus stops in front of QVB. However a 67 metre tram stop will extend to the southern side of the Town Hall – it will be far quicker for passengers to reach, say, York Street from there than to stay on the tram and percolate through and round QVB. Having two 67 metre tram stops so close together will make Sydney the laughing stock of the world particularly when tourists and local post YouTube videos showing the trams to be virtually empty after the Town Hall stop.

Regards