

Submission regarding City South Eastern Light Rail Project

Ms Melanie Brown
12 Coogee Bay Rd
Randwick 2031

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Whilst I support the Light Rail in general, there are several points, which are either unclear or suboptimal with regard to its implementation, particularly at and around the proposed Randwick stop.

I have thoroughly reviewed all gazetted documents in relation to the project.

The details relating to the exact nature of the Randwick stop, but also any alternatives, are scant in comparison to all other stops and lines. There are many particular features of the service and stop, which demand careful thought and attention, which appear not to have been fully thought out or discussed in the available material.

I have a number of concerns:

These relate largely to the proposed Randwick Stop at High Cross Park.

Although the existence of open space at High Cross Park is understandably an almost irresistible temptation, its use and virtual destruction for the light rail stop is very short sighted.

Randwick's rather dubious past history of heritage preservation would not be enhanced by the destruction of the only real open space within the Randwick shopping village – the link between the main shopping precinct and The Spot.

It is stating obvious, but open space, once destroyed, will NEVER be regained.

This would be a most detrimental environmental impact upon the appearance, heritage and amenity of the immediate area, but would also reflect poorly upon the entire district.

In fact, this stop and the project overall should be seen as an opportunity to improve the visual amenity of the area, to plant it more aesthetically and not just to concrete the easiest open area to get a dysfunctional 'quick fix'. This should be regarded as an upgrade to both the transport woes of inner Sydney but also the opportunity to redress some of the planning blights of the past and to once again make this part of Randwick an elegant and well thought out feature rather than another expeditious and dysfunctional eyesore.

Secondly, the stop would appear to be most illogical in its position. Whilst the open space is the easy place to locate it, the site is compromised on many or most levels.

A good and increasing number of light rail users will have the Prince of Wales, Sydney Children's and Royal Hospital for Women as their destination. Unsurprisingly, a good number of these folk will be elderly, infirm, children or infants with parents or disabled. To ask this large user group to make the passage of at least 150 m from the stop, across what used to be the park, through the major bus routes and stops, down High St and then into the Hospitals seems unreasonable and illogical. Over and above this, there is no weather protection provided.

Thirdly, the interchange, particularly as it relates to buses, is made clumsy, cumbersome and inefficient due to the attempt to 'fit' everything into what is in reality a large and ugly roundabout – that is, High Cross Park.

It would seem far more logical and efficient to locate the stop at the eastern end of High St adjacent to the Hospitals' entrance. Obviously, this would have implications for bus interchange and traffic flows, but would put the people where they most logically would want to alight as well as retaining not only the heritage of the district embodied in High Cross Park but also the appearance and amenity of the park and its related areas.

It would seem imperative, given the increased number of pedestrian movements, that the entire area of the stop, the park and its surrounds and feeders (regardless of whether the stop is relocated to High St) be made 40km/h zones. There was no indication of any such plan in any of the documents I was able to view.

The average traffic speed is well below this in any case. The higher speed limit currently in existence only serves to allow those using the area as a drag strip more leeway to do so. There are recent precedents in similar Council areas within inner Sydney.

There are three schools in the immediate area (at the Western end of Coogee Bay Rd) with large numbers of child pedestrians' morning and afternoon. There are also school drop off and pick up car lines which currently extend back along the corner of Coogee Bay Rd well into Belmore Rd which would severely impair the functioning of the proposed Randwick stop if it were to be located in High Cross Park.

The safety implications are obvious and well documented. Pedestrian safety in the area is currently, and will become more so, a matter of significant risk for the relevant authorities.

The disregard with which the planning for the area has been undertaken is highlighted in the fact that there is consideration for housing a substation at the High Cross Park above ground. This would be both a visual eyesore and acoustic pollutant of an unacceptable nature.

I am, as indicated, in favour of both the idea and implementation of the Light Rail Project, but its gazetted form is unacceptable and not in the best interests of either those it seeks to serve or the local area and its constituents.

Yours faithfully,

Melanie Brown