

CBD AND SOUTH EAST LIGHT RAIL

Submission on EIS – S.Calpis 12 December 2013 (4 pages)

GENERAL COMMENTS

I live in West Kingsford 15 mins walk from the UNSW bus stop and about a 25min walk from Souths Juniors at Kingsford. I do not drive and rely on public transport to get around during the week. On weekends I am a car passenger. Project reps have indicated that every one of our buses will change yet there has been no transparency on bus changes. The EIS has been released without the separate Bus Strategy release at the same time.

What we have been told is that student express bus services for UNSW will cease as will a lot of designated school buses. We have not been told where bus stops will be, frequency, what changed routes will be, how we get to surrounding suburbs. When I raised these issues of project staff a few months ago I was told to wait for the EIS. Well the impacts and answers are not in the EIS and now we are expected to accept the light rail without knowing the scale and severity of the impact on other transport. Letters to State Ministers on this topic weeks ago have not had replies.

It has been said that UA cannot go ahead without infrastructure. Light rail is not infrastructure for UA and never has been!

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Light rail stops – the light rail stop is 2 long blocks from POW hospital or more than a block past it. There has been no consideration in the EIS of the sick and the elderly accessing POW regularly e.g. for chemotherapy.

Similarly the Souths Juniors stop is inaccessible easily by West Kingsford residents as it is the size of 2 blocks from Kingsford centre.

Currently, residents often get dropped close to a bus stop on Anzac Pde due to the 15-20min walk distance from home to get to that point. That needs to be considered for the interchange stop at Souths and other stops e.g. for parents with prams/the elderly.

The EIS does not make it clear whether buses can be caught from the UNSW rail stop. That is the main stop for my area of west Kingsford.

The Todman Ave stop is insufficient for Kensington school students. A stop is needed at Lorne Ave/Darling St Kensington for the reasons outlined below under child safety.

Child safety- at a recent precinct presentation EIS project staff were unaware of the schools impacted by the light rail. They indicated their focus had been on Sydney High (boys and girls). There are very

many children going to very many different schools (public and private) who travel through Anzac Pde.

They currently catch school or normal buses and often change route along the way but on a hop off, hop on basis. The EIS has been remiss in not studying the light rail impact on them. There should be discussions with every school in the Eastern suburbs to ascertain suburb start points. Also bus surveys to estimate current numbers of school children, on school or normal buses, alighting at the various schools and current changeover locations.

These schoolchildren are often young and travelling by themselves. The EIS team suggests that they jostle with everyone else at the Souths Juniors interchange for travel on light rail that can only seat around 80.

The Our lady of the Sacred Heart High and Our Lady of the Rosary Primary schoolchildren, currently using the Lorne Ave and Darling St bus stops at Kensington, are expected to walk more than a block over busy roads to catch or alight from the light rail past Todman Ave. Todman Ave is a known spot notorious for car accidents. They need their own school buses to continue and a light rail stop near Lorne Ave/Darling St Kensington. Protect our children!

Getting around my surrounding suburbs- project reps have listed from the EIS the bus numbers that will be affected by light rail. All buses currently travelling on Anzac Pde through Kingsford/Kensington are affected! Yet the EIS does not address how I can get to where I travel on a regular basis for medical appointments/shopping/family visits etc.. For instance, I go from UNSW bus stop to Taylor Square to go to St Vincents for medical and specialized physio appointments/Macquarie St specialists/Sydney Eye hospital/POW hospital/Charring Cross for other physio/Bondi Junction/Bondi Beach/ Randwick/Coogee /Maroubra/Matraville to name just a few.

Express buses do not currently stop at UNSW. If it is intended that the bus situation will be solved by express services running from the Souths Juniors interchange, that has dire consequences for West Kingsford residents going to Taylor Square and beyond.

The EIS from memory has also not considered the 302 and 303 bus routes servicing West Kingsford. I regularly catch these services from Day and Eastern Ave either to the city/the UNSW bus stop/Eastlakes or Eastgardens.

The EIS indicates no right hand turn travelling south from Anzac Pde into Day Ave. It is then unclear if there is a left turn travelling north from Day Ave into Anzac Pde. They are the only bus services close to home for me. If I read between the lines unless they can turn at Day and Anzac both directions we will be left without those services. We would then have to do the 15 min walk in rain hail or shine with no protection to UNSW, with no indication what services we can get from there and whether we need to walk further still to interchanges etc adding to time/cost/inconvenience.

The EIS in my view has focused on commuters into the eastern suburbs and not addressed how residents will be able to get to where they need to go under shelter to suburbs currently well serviced by buses!

Car travel- with less car lanes proposed/light changes etc/people behaviour there is no evidence in the EIS that light rail will improve congestion and not add to it.

The school of thought that thinks that car users are suddenly going to use crowded light rail with only 80 seats each carriage is in my view misguided. Many residents in our area would have to walk some distance to get to the light rail stop without cover from the elements, then change route sometimes a few times to get to other eastern suburbs. Let alone whether the rail stops will have sufficient shelter for the number of people.

The restriction on street turns currently accessible has not been fully addressed in the EIS. Cars will need to travel further distances around blocks to access their own streets. For instance Borrodale Rd Kingsford residents going to or from Kingsford centre.

The reduction in traffic lanes, changes in traffic lights favouring approaching light rail/changes in street turns, is only going to add to the chaos, not alleviate it. Add UA into the mix for which light rail was never premised and we have disaster. Anyone who thinks that UA apartments would be approved without car spots is dreaming!!

Loss of parking- the impact on local businesses of the loss of street parking is likely to be enormous. Carpark parking a block away is not a solution either. I have heard residents say we will just go to a suburb with parking.

The EIS does not address the fact that there is a very busy medical centre at Kingsford Centre frequented by many aged and injured patients. There are also several optometrists/physiotherapists/dentists and another medical practice on Anzac Pde between Barker St and nine ways. The loss of parking directly outside those premises will have a huge impact for frail and injured patients needing assistance.

There is also the impact of loss of High St parking for people going to POW as well as the many UNSW parking there all day every day- even 7.30am Sat mornings from Anzac up High St is full. This leads me to assume much of the High St parking is used by resident students living on campus.

We do not want more timed parking in our streets!! As many residents have driveways we are not entitled to resident permits so our children/friends themselves with young children have difficulty visiting.

Overlay maps- at every opportunity from a few months ago I have been asking of Government for overlay maps for the Anzac Pde corridor and surrounding suburbs, to show how all modes of transport will work together. The EIS does not clearly show how this will occur especially when it does not have all the bus information. Overlay maps need to be provided for transparency!

Loss of trees, many significant- we live in beautiful leafy village type suburbs for which we have paid large sums for the privilege. The impact of loss of trees on Anzac Pde and the Randwick area is enormous. Tree replacement will be difficult as there will be little if any open space left. Centennial Park seems the obvious place where the project will plant. That leaves us with barren suburbs, then combine that with UA and we have the likes of St Leonards station or Chatswood. Disgraceful!

CONCLUSION- to quote from the EIS Tech Paper 1 Transport Operations Report pg 10 “..Broadly speaking the traffic analysis demonstrates that the CCELRL project can be introduced into the road network without significant detrimental impact to general traffic and buses...” and pg 13 “..Impacts on existing customers of suburban bus services have been mitigated through the provision of additional cross-regional routes to satisfy demand to key destinations and easy interchange to light rail...”

Without having the Bus Strategy released for the entire eastern suburbs and Taylor Square together with the EIS, they are completely unfounded claims with absolutely no evidence given in the EIS to support them!

Time for light rail has passed in my view and should be abandoned for the reasons I have outlined above. Consideration could be given instead to heavy rail so long as it does not carry the same issues with it.