



Randwick & District Historical Society

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Randwick and District Historical Society Inc. opposes the proposal to use High Cross Reserve/Park as a bus/LRV interchange and substation. The interchange as proposed becomes the focus of Randwick rather than the infrastructure connecting Randwick to the CBD.

The Society is supportive of government's efforts to plan and implement an improved public transportation policy but should not compromise or destroy areas of significance.

It was disappointing to find selective criteria throughout the EIS was used to evaluate impact. This undermines the ability of respondents to avoid the same pitfall. It is not a "yes" or "no" proposal. People interested in heritage, history and social development cannot ignore a wonderful opportunity, to be part of the generation redesigning Sydney's transportation system. We must ask what, why and how and when and remember that the true costs of the project will be decided by those that come after us, as we evaluate the true value to our society of the train network, Kingsford Smith Airport, Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Opera House. This is how our society and our legacy will be judged.

The R&DHS Inc committee will confine its response to address the major problems directly impacting on High Cross Reserve (known as Park), by the Interchange and substation foreshadowed in the various volumes of the EIS. This will make the area over 50% hard stand light industrial. The interchange, as proposed, disregards the Park's status as the historic and social focus of Randwick and transforms it into infrastructure works connecting Randwick to the CBD.

High Cross is the heritage core what Randwick signifies; our eastern beaches, world recognised Prince of Wales Hospital and Medical Campus, prestigious Global UNSW and the historic Precincts of The Spot and Struggletown are in this place. It was and is how this space "is", the essence of it being there, defines Randwick City as a diverse, vibrant, relevant and progressive area. Randwick is an economic, social and increasingly environmental hub and the park and its outlook explains our European development and how we came to where we are today.

The evaluation methods are deficient, selectively nominating a particular building from a particular position but not seeing "the whole". For instance finding the visual impact on the POW group setting will be "minor". There is a reference to the War Memorial being retained however there is no reference to the other items and trees dedicated to individuals and organisations from our community. The description of the Memorial is also flawed.

**Randwick Municipality was proclaimed 22 February 1859
the first in urban Sydney**

From the days of early settlement what we know as High Cross Park/Reserve was a recognised meeting place, the common, for the district. It was here citizens gathered to discuss their ideas for a municipality before Randwick incorporated as a local government area.

- High Cross is a Victorian Park in the centre of a very busy road intersection
- Dominating the western aspect on Avoca Street is the imposing 1856 Edmund Blackett Block, the Destitute Children's Asylum , now part of the Prince of Wales Hospital complex
- Also visible and part of the complex is an administration building designed by J. Horbury Hunt built in 1863 and
- the Catherine Hayes Hospital 1870
- North, Belmore Road, we see modern buildings on the left
- On our right, Belmore Road and Avoca Street featuring a villa built by William Ellis in 1859. The tower was added a decade later
- 1874 sandstone sculpture by Walter McGill of Captain Cook looking to Botany Bay
- Heritage buildings in Avoca Street visible from High Cross include "Corona" and "Hygeia" erected in 1898 , Goldring House 1886
- The southern aspect, Cuthill Street, features the Royal Hotel 1887 and older style visually complementary 3 storey walk up apartments
- Looking east, although the corner buildings are modern the streetscape from this park boarder is open and inviting because it is an invitation to the sea
- The east also affords views of imposing buildings and gardens of landmark buildings on Coogee Bay Road eg the Bridgidine College and the art deco Gower Galtees
- The South East, Perouse Road, aspect of the Royal Hotel and opposite are buildings that provide a snapshot of the various styles of Randwick's residential housing over the eras
- It provides a visual relief from the busy urban activitiies surrounding it
- It is a haven for people seeking a place outside without the distraction of activities or commercial venues, even though it appears incongerous given the road network surrounding it

The Committe of the Society is happy to discuss these issues in further details if required.

Freda Backes
Hon. Secretary RDHS