

## **Submission, in response to the CBD & South East Light Rail Project Environmental Impact Statement**

I am supportive of projects, innovations and changes to Sydney's public transport that seek to improve access, affordability and operational servicing. Most particularly changes that address the wide variety of passenger needs required of a modern, active and growing global city.

I am grateful for this opportunity to respond the CBD & South East Light Rail (CSELR) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

There has been growing concern expressed in the media, public forums and official statements in recent years regarding general traffic congestion and the limited options open to increasing bus services in Sydney's Central Business District (CBD). These reports suggest that current services are in crisis, at or exceeding maximum capacity and at times unable to meet demand expectations. This state would lead to the belief that future growth forecasts are likely to result in increased congestion, prolonged travel times and a general degradation in service. Accepting these public statements are accurate then alternative solutions are absolutely necessary.

The CSELR Project seeks to address some of Sydney's critical public transport needs. Most notably of these is the crisis state in bus congestion within the CBD and at Circular Quay. Further the current bus service between Central Railway and the University of New South Wales (UNSW) is identified as struggling to satisfactorily meet current demand and unlikely to satisfy future passenger projections.

The proposed route to and from Circular Quay via Central, Moore Park and then branching to both Randwick and Kingsford appears to address the two primary objectives by reducing busses in the CBD and increasing capacity to and from the UNSW. Consequential servicing is achieved for Sydney Boys' High School and Sydney Girls' High School, Sydney Cricket Ground, Sydney Football Stadium, Moore Park Entertainment Quarter, Centennial Parklands, Randwick Racecourse, Randwick TAFE and the Prince of Wales Hospital.

This submission, whilst acknowledging the wider objectives, focuses on areas of concern I have with the project within the City of Randwick. That is the sections Moore Park to Randwick via Alison Road, Wansey Road and High Street and Moore Park to Kingsford via Anzac Parade.

The reduction of bus movements is no doubt a benefit to the City of Sydney and quite possibly an absolute necessity. The CSELR, whilst appearing to deliver this benefit, does so at the expense of residents and businesses of Randwick City. This includes passengers, local businesses and residents in close proximity to the routes.

## **Overall Service Outcomes**

I consider the current service provided and experienced by Randwick residents to be of generally high level. The service variation including all stops, limited stops, express and metro services combined with different destinations and routes creates a variable mix to meet the needs of the community. Many may argue its deficiencies, however, on balance the service works and can be relied upon to transport passengers within reasonable travel times. The service variety, frequency, reliability and convenience all contribute to my assessment.

The CSELR needs to deliver a transport outcome that at a minimum meets current service and where possible exceeds. The CSELR is a key aspect of an overall transport system servicing Randwick City and the City of Sydney. The integration of pedestrian, bus and private vehicle access to the Light Rail is imperative if an overall transport system is to adequately replace current services, be initially successful and capable of meeting future needs.

Randwick City journeys to and from the CBD are predominantly to Hyde Park, Martin Place or Circular Quay. Very few, with exception of the UNSW services, are destined to or from Central. Characteristics for the Randwick City - CBD bus services are:

1. The ratio of services, I would estimate, to be between seven and ten to Martin Place or Circular Quay for each one to Central Station
2. All services, with the exception of the M10, do not access George Street

The CSELR proposes the majority of Randwick passengers to travel via Central Railway, along George Street to Town Hall and Wynyard to or from Circular Quay. This represents an increased journey distance with proposed travel times varying from marginally quicker to exceeding current services. The exception being the lower patronage route to Central Station where travel times are expected to be less.

The CSELR is not, in itself, a transformational transport improvement for Randwick. The CSELR still relies on a well-integrated bus network and efficient movement of passengers at the interchanges to deliver a superior service.

The proposed changes to the bus services do not appear to adequately support an integrated public transport system.

The interchanges appear constrained in the number, frequency and capacity of passengers required to transfer from bus, pedestrian and other modes to the light rail.

The CSELR Project needs to ensure integration at the Randwick and Kingsford ends is appropriate and sufficient to meet the overall objectives of the project.

## **Power Lines**

The current proposal to utilise overhead power lines is undesirable. Randwick City Council is supportive of undergrounding power lines for buildings and streets wherever possible.

The CSELR Project should give consideration to undergrounding the power lines required for the light rail lines.

## **Traffic Movements on Local Roads**

The combination of restricted right turns and reduced traffic lanes along Anzac Parade between Alison Road and Gardeners Road is likely to result in more cars either required or choosing to access local streets. The CSELR appears to be encouraging if not prescribing to the phenomenon colloquially referred to as 'rat running' where local streets are used in preference to main roads. Once directed to local roads it is expected that an additional proportion of vehicles will continue through the back streets to avoid Anzac Parade.

The CSELR Project should perform traffic modelling, studies and recommendations based on the significant changes proposed for Anzac Parade.

## **Street Parking**

The near total loss of all parking spaces along the route is considered to be a negative outcome for businesses, local residents and visitors to Randwick, Kensington and Kingsford. The parking spaces that are proposed to go are currently in high demand. They experience high occupation usages throughout the week day, weekends and into night time trading hours. The loss of amenity, access and convenience that street parking offers is not adequately addressed in the EIS. Parking along an around the proposed rail line is currently stressed.

I do not have answers to the loss of parking however seeking solutions in the neighbouring streets

- is not reasonable
- unlikely to provide sufficient relief to the loss or
- adequately offers an alternative required to support a town centre

## **Kensington & Kingsford Town Centres**

The combination of loss of street parking and the traffic travelling in the lanes closest to the footpath is more likely than not to adversely impact the amenity along Anzac Parade and particularly the town centres. The suggestion that there will be increased patronage due to the light rail appears counter intuitive unless the street scape is addressed to give the CSELR corridor an attractive appeal.

The CSELR Project should

- be obtaining concepts incorporated in other successful light rail projects from around the world that alleviated the adverse impacts along the rail routes
- collaborate with NSW Department of Planning, Randwick City Council and other town planning experts to counter the desolation the rail corridor is likely to leave along Anzac Parade
- be ensuring the rail corridor is 'people friendly' and suitable to attract positive social activities necessary to promote vibrant town centres

## **Light Rail Stations**

### **– Distance Between**

The distance between light rail stops is noted to be greater than the current placement of bus stops. This added distance, whilst assisting in reducing travel times, will on average add to walking times to the stops and effectively overall 'door to door' travel times for passengers in the vicinity of the rail route.

This additional distance and time is likely to especially burden elderly and disable passengers. There is the potential that the burden is such that these passengers are disenfranchised and the service beyond their physical means to access.

### **– Platform Access**

The fewer number of stops means a concentration of passengers and thus pedestrians entering and leaving the station from both sides of Anzac Parade, Alison Road and High Street. This activity is both a pedestrian safety concern and an interruption to vehicular movements with people needing to access the stations.

Safe access to the platforms for all passengers is paramount. This is especially so for the elderly, disable and infirm.

### **– School Children**

The CSELR is likely to transport students attending schools in the North of Randwick including Randwick Girls High, Marcellin College, Brigidine College, Randwick Boys' High and to a lesser extent the primary schools nearby to these high schools. These schools would all be serviced from the interchange at Randwick. Safe pedestrian access to and from the interchange for school children is mandatory.

The Kingsford spur passes Kensington Public School and Our Lady of the Scared Heart. Pedestrian access to these schools is envisaged from the proposed stop at Todman Avenue and would require crossing at least Anzac Parade and quite possibly Todman Avenue. Again safe access to and from the rail stop is mandatory.

### **– Randwick Racecourse Proposed Location**

There are quite distinct passenger demands for Randwick Racecourse. There are the occasional race day and special events patrons and there are daily local resident and Randwick TAFE commuters. The proposed location appears to be positioned to service the Racecourse however not so convenient for the local commuter passengers.

The proposed location for the Randwick Racecourse Station should be reviewed to take into account both the local daily needs as well as the event requirements to reach an optimum location.

## **– Prince of Wales Hospital(s) Proposed Location**

The current proposal requires patients, visitors and staff accessing the Prince of Wales Hospital (POWH) complex by public transport to take an uncovered walk to and from High Cross Park. Whilst most passengers would find little difficulty with this prospect there remains many other less able and who rely on public transport to access the hospitals.

The CSELR project should consider a stop in front of the POWH to provide convenient access to the hospitals.

## **Alison Road – Wansey Road rail Alignment**

The Alison Road and Wansey Road rail line should be reworked to pass along or within Randwick Racecourse land avoiding the

- disruption to traffic and parking along this section of Alison Road and Wansey Road
- need to remove and replace so many established trees

This change would add an attractive feature to this leg of the light rail journey and passenger experience. There would be a brief opportunity to enjoy the open green space offered by the Racecourse vista.

## **Construction Phase – Anzac Parade**

The construction phase is expected to include track alignment preparation and installation of the rail infrastructure.

- Preparation is presumed to include demolition, clearance and where required relocation of existing trees, gardens, flagpoles, traffic and other utilities infrastructure
- Installation is presumed to include constructing track support, rail lines, stations, power supply systems and associated rail infrastructure

The construction phase is anticipated to have an immediate and continuous impact to traffic along Anzac Parade. Construction within the Kensington and Kingsford is also expected to severely disrupt the functioning of the town centres. A number of the issues of concern detailed regarding the implemented CSELR Project present during construction without the benefits. There is anticipated along Anzac Parade

- potential loss of significant on street parking spaces,
- potential loss of the bus lane whilst busses still in full service
- disruption to traffic in and around the local area,
- reduced from three to two lanes in peak hour,
- construction noise dust and dirt and
- increased rat running through Kingsford and Kensington local streets.

This disruption is all without the stated benefits of the CSELR to transport passengers, relieve Anzac Parade of busses and provide the positive economic outcomes for local businesses.

The construction phase brings all the disruption with little to no benefit.

The CSELR Project must be mindful of the disruption the construction is likely to have on local areas. Considering the construction period is forecast to occur over many months it is imperative that the disruption caused is minimised. Special attention need to be paid to ensuring Anzac Parade is able to support traffic, public transport, local business and local resident activities throughout the construction. Destroying the function or amenity of Anzac Parade is not acceptable and must be avoided throughout construction.

I thank you for receiving my response to CSELR EIS. I look forward to your assessment of all of the responses. I am particularly hopeful, that you are able to incorporate a good number of the suggestions received as part of the EIS process.

My Best Regards

Greg Moore 16 Dec 2013

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