

Re CBD AND SOUTH EAST LIGHT RAIL PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Dear Sir,

As a commuting cyclist from Randwick to the City I am concerned at the superficial consideration given to pedestrian safety in the project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The proposal as exhibited removes off road cycling infrastructure on Wansey Rd and Alison Rd and attracts many pedestrians waiting for or alighting from trams. Mixing pedestrians and bicycles on a 2 meter wide footpath will most likely result in collisions.

The EIS misrepresents the Wansey Rd cycleway as shared with pedestrians. The Wansey Rd footpath has no pedestrians in the morning peak (see photo below). As the 'shared' cycleway has no houses on it, it has no significant pedestrian movement. In fact, until Randwick City Council built the 'shared' cycleway in 2005, there was no trafficable footpath on Wansey Rd west.

The EIS states that "The intent of all stops within the pedestrian zone is to maximise the pedestrian flow from all angles. Where possible, the stop platforms would be integrated into the surrounding footpath levels to create a seamless transition, allowing easy access and extending the available space within the street for pedestrians." (section 5.2.2) It is incongruous with this objective to mix cyclists and pedestrians in a 2 meter wide footpath.

The EIS appears to suggest that the answer to construction conflict is to send cyclists onto Alison Rd, stating on page 15-29, "With combined factors of steep road gradient, high traffic volumes during peak hours and reduced lane capacities, Alison Road would be a desirable on-road cycle route during construction." As a commuting rider I avoid roads with these criteria and the RTA's "NSW Bicycle Guidelines" would also not recommend mixing bikes and cars with reduced lane capacities.

The photograph below shows the Wansey Rd "shared" pedestrian and cycle pathway with no pedestrians seen on the footpath.

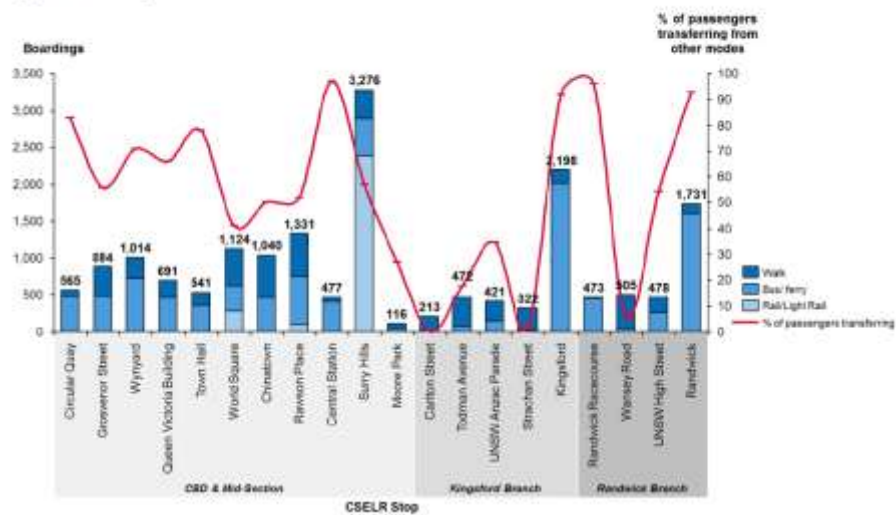
Figure 5.34 Photograph of the existing pathway along Wansey Road looking towards the proposed Wansey Road stop.



Source: Parsons Brinckerhoff 2013

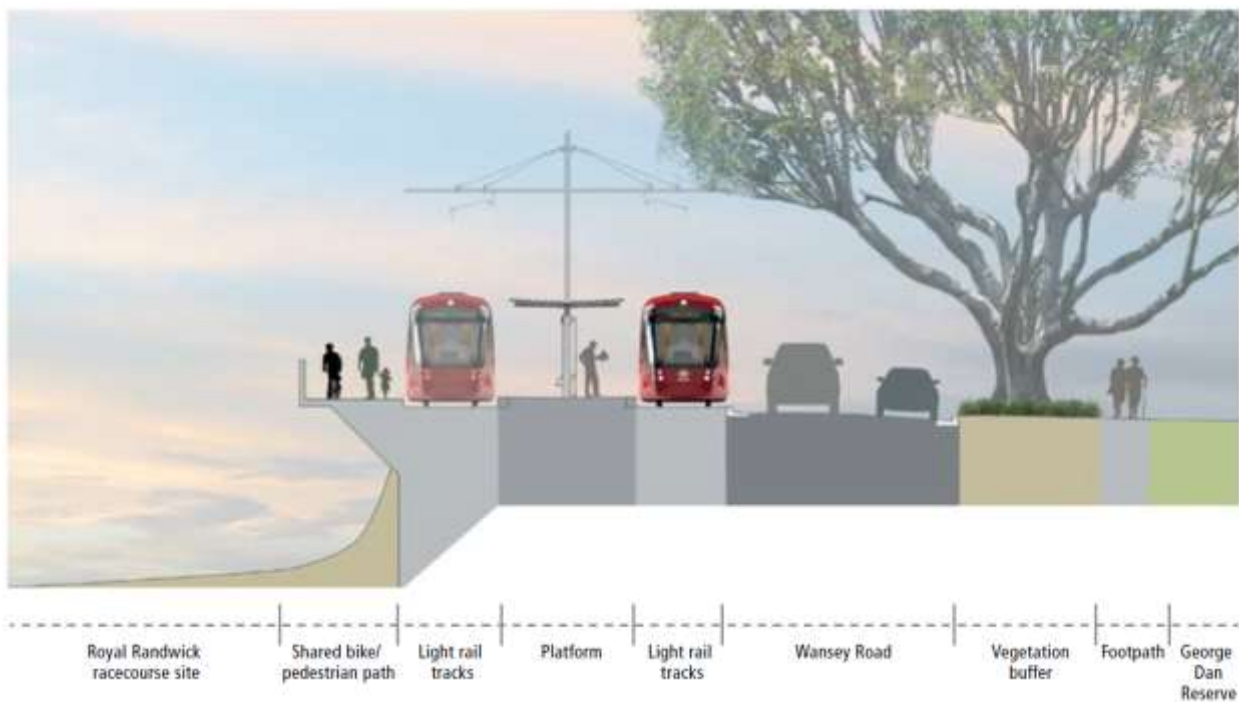
Page 117 of the EIS indicates 505 pedestrians join the inbound AM peak light rail at Wansey Rd (north) and 478 pedestrians inbound AM peak light rail join at Wansey Rd (South) or UNSW. There does not appear to be data provided in the EIS on the outbound AM peak. The Wansey Rd (South) or UNSW stop will have a large number of pedestrians alighting the light rail and stepping into the "shared" pedestrian cycleway. In the absence of any data, this may mean that the Wansey Rd UNSW High St stop has close to 1,000 pedestrian movements an hour competing with cyclists in a pathway no more than 2m wide!

Figure 3-11: 2021 AM Peak CSELR Boardings and Mode of Access by Light Rail Stop⁸⁶



With 500 pedestrians per hour waiting for light rail trams, accidents will occur until Randwick City Council is obliged to remove cyclists from the pathway. Some cyclists to avoid pedestrians will migrate from the dedicated off road cycle path to the single lane Wansey Rd. Pedestrian and / or cyclists fatalities are unfortunately imaginable with the current design.

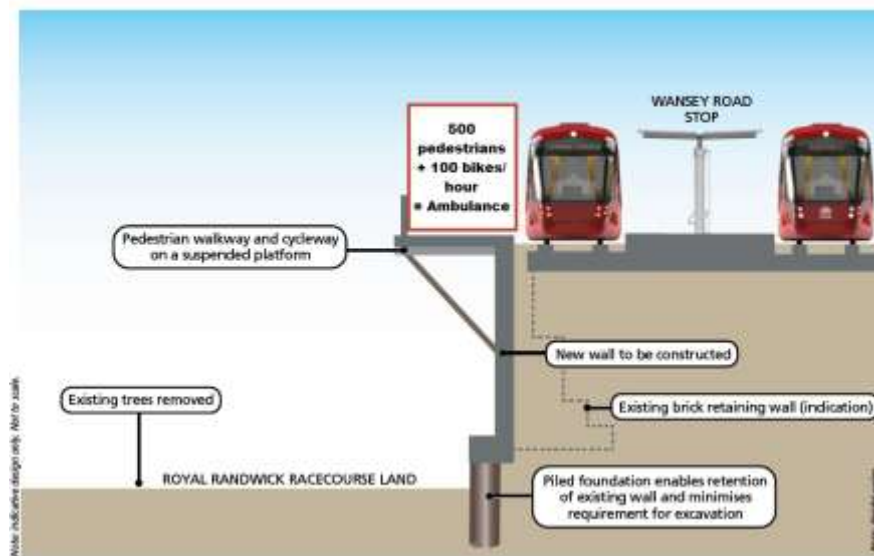
Figure 3.20 Indicative section – Wansey Road stop



Recommendation

The solution is simple. Wansey Rd is to be cantilevered to create the "shared" zone. Extend the cantilever and recreate the segregated off road cycle lanes that exists today!

Figure 5.4B Illustrative section through proposed Wansey Road stop retaining wall



Conclusion

If NSW is to see the health and economic benefits of "More people cycling more often", it will not come from removing effective cycling infrastructure and replacing it with more friction between pedestrians and cyclists or from encouraging cyclists on to roads with steep gradients, high traffic volumes and reduced lane capacities.

Brian Street