

Submission to the Department of
Planning and Infrastructure
Sydney CBD and South East Light Rail Project
(SS1 6042)

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Background

The Wansey Road Action Group (WAG) and Randwick City Council (RCC) have submitted detailed responses to the EIS for the CSELR and it is not our intention to duplicate this work. Our intention is to focus on the relative costs associated with two of options being considered, which are

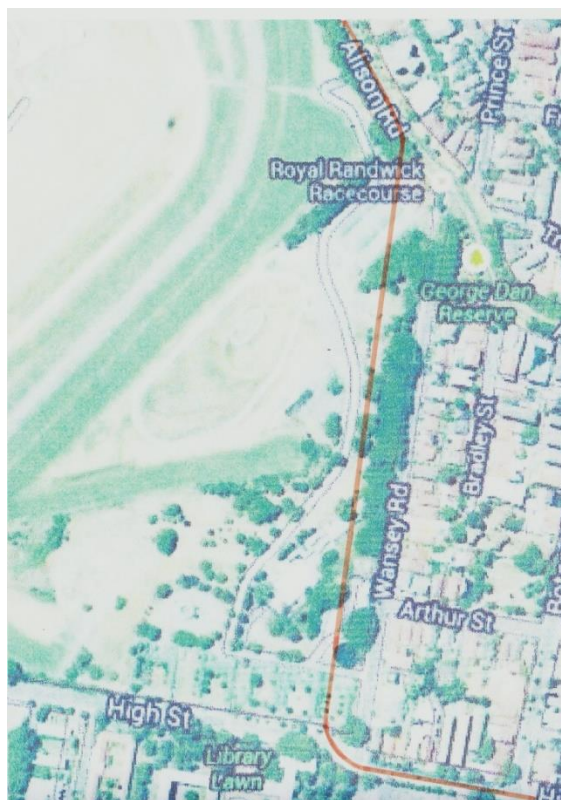
- The EIS preferred Wansey Rd Alignment.
- The WAG preferred Viaduct option.

It seems very clear that the community and environmental benefits of the WAG preferred Viaduct or the Randwick City Council preferred racecourse loop with High Street stop vastly outweigh an alignment in Wansey Road, and it is our view that has been shown conclusively in the WAG EIS submission and the Randwick City Council EIS submission.

Any form of complete costs analysis has the Viaduct option well favoured over any Wansey Rd alignment. The Wansey Rd alignment can only be favoured over the Viaduct option when a very narrow focus on the cost of construction, ignoring every other relevant factor, is used as a basis for comparison. The purpose of this submission is to look at a wider view of the benefits of the Viaduct alignment and cost these benefits so a more informed decision can be reached.

The Viaduct Option

The Viaduct in particular is a feasible proposal to run part of the Light Rail in unused, open land inside the Randwick Racecourse which has been designed and costed by Transport for NSW.



The Viaduct option has been designed, costed and confirmed feasible by TNSW.

This re-alignment fully satisfies the key elements considered for the design of this section of the Light Rail, as noted at section 4.3.3 of the EIS, and being:

- No displacement of kerbside parking;
- No impacts to local traffic flow as Wansey Road can remain in its current configuration
- The line would not be located in proximity to and endanger trees in Royal Randwick Racecourse directly adjacent to the Wansey Road footpath;
- It would not require re-engineering of the retaining wall currently supporting Wansey Road on its western side adjoining the Royal Randwick Racecourse;
- There would be no vertical geometry issues at the crest of Wansey Road; and
- It allows for the retention of the stop location at the High Street ends of Wansey Road and the relocation of the stop at the northern end of Wansey Rd into Alison Rd to increase the catchment area.

This proposal would also provide the following advantages over the option nominated in the EIS:

- It will bring the trees into the public domain (part of the rail and/or road reserve), making for a highly attractive streetscape and route for the Light Rail passengers;
- Pedestrian and vehicle safety will be significantly enhanced by placing the Light Rail in its own corridor;
- Moving the Wansey Road stop into Alison Road will also improve pedestrian and vehicle safety and will increase the patronage catchment area of the Light rail;
- Property access for residents, visitors, the disabled and emergency vehicles will remain as at present;
- To a significant degree noise and vibration impacts for residents will be eliminated by the greater distance between the Light Rail and homes down most of Wansey Road;
- No re-engineering of Wansey Road infrastructure would be needed, except for the area near the stop at the southern end of Wansey Road;
- Increased profile and physical presence of the Light Rail alignment on the racecourse property would integrate easily with the planned Urban Activation Precinct residential development of that site in the future;
- Employs best practice of separating the Light Rail from road traffic and pedestrians / cyclists as well as residential buildings; and
- Large vehicles will be able to utilise Wansey Road more easily.

Costed Benefits of the Viaduct Option

WAG has asked for a complete cost/benefit analysis which Transport for NSW (TNSW) has for some reason been reluctant to complete. To date all of TNSW advice to us on costs has been verbal, which is a very disappointing approach to a critical issue on a major project. In the absence of this analysis on costs and benefits we would like to share with DPI and the Minister our understanding of the relevant costs for the purpose of comparison.

We have been told by TNSW that RCC's preferred alignment will cost \$40 million extra in construction costs.

TNSW have also told us that the Viaduct option is feasible and will cost \$16,000,000 in construction costs and that The Wansey Rd alignment will cost \$3,000,000 in extra construction costs.

The difference in Construction costs between the Wansey Rd alignment and the Viaduct in the Racecourse is \$13,000,000; this is a saving of \$24,000,000 on the RCC preferred alignment.

It should be noted that the Viaduct option and the EIS preferred Wansey Rd alignment are cost neutral in terms of Australian Turf Club (ATC) compensation. It has been confirmed to us by the ATC and further validated by their round table partners the RCC that the ATC are not looking for extra compensation for the land the Viaduct option will use.

We calculate the Viaduct option will realise the following costed benefits:

	Costed Value
1) Saves 170 parking spaces which at the RCC development cost of parking of \$30, 000 per parking space represent a value of \$5,100,000 in parking spaces saved.	\$5,100,000
2) Leaving Wansey Rd intact saves 18 major trees from damage and likely destruction as detailed in the EIS. If we place a conservative value of \$60,000 to each tree this totals \$1,080,000.	\$1,080,000
3) The value of the conservation of the visual beauty of the area, both from the Grandstands of the Royal Randwick Racecourse and Wansey Rd itself is difficult to quantify, and with 100 year old trees being destroyed the impacts last a very long time. At the moment the visual beauty of the area leads to a value of \$81,000,000 of the Wansey Rd residences and the Royal Randwick Racecourse. Visual beauty has a value, and there is no doubt the community values the visual beauty associated with the area. It seems equally clear to us that the community's representatives can't ignore community opinion and refuse to assign a value to this when assessing the options for the CSELR. To put a figure on the community value of the visual beauty of the area we think it is reasonable to calculate the intangible value of this by applying a very modest 5% impact to the visual beauty of the area which would equate to \$4,050,000.	\$4,050,000
4) Bringing the trees into the rail reserve and allowing the views to the west and the city will make a very attractive route for light rail passengers. This route will undoubtedly become a tourist attraction, particularly with the view of the city at night. As well as this the ability to "kiss and ride" is enhanced with the ability to stop on Wansey Rd and will increase patronage. This increased patronage will add \$786,240 per annum to fare receipts per year, assuming a fare charge of \$3.00 per trip and a very conservative three extra passengers per journey for 12 hours of the operation time. Over five years this would add an extra \$3,931,200 to the CSELR receipts.	\$3,931,200

5) Construction of the Light Rail alignment in Wansey Rd will undoubtedly cause damage to the houses in Wansey Rd and this will lead to both litigation and repair costs. We estimate the cost of litigation and repairs to the 30 residences involved at a very conservative \$950,000.	\$950,000
6) Not having to incur the construction costs to resolve the vertical geometry issues at the crest of Wansey Road will save the project \$1,500,000 in construction costs.	\$1,500,000
7) The alignment in Wansey Rd brings cars, cycles and pedestrians in very close proximity, exacerbated by the speed and frequency of the Light Rail Vehicles particularly traveling downhill at an estimated speed of 50kph. In Melbourne Trams hit, or were hit by, vehicles, and hit other trams or pedestrians 956 times on the city's network in 2007-08. If we use a comparison based on the relative number of tram trips between the CSELR and Yarra trams this equates to 50 accidents per annum on the CSELR. This risk can be completely eliminated with the Viaduct option. Compensation paid to people hit by trams costs Yarra Trams from \$300,000 to \$1,100,000 per incident. If we assume a very conservative one accident a year in the busy and congested Wansey Rd alignment at the minimum amount of \$300,000 compensation this will cost Transport for NSW \$1,500,000 in compensation costs and another \$250,000 in litigation costs over five years, making no allowance for the human costs of these entirely avoidable accidents.	\$1,750,000
Total Value of Benefits for the Viaduct Option:	\$18,361 200

These factors alone represent a costed benefit from adopting the Viaduct Option of \$18,361,200 which far outweighs the extra construction costs of \$13,000,000.

High St Alignment Option

TNSW have told us they are developing another option that has the tracks in Wansey run part underground by using a retaining wall to resolve the vertical geometry issues at the crest of Wansey Road. With a layout across the road from East to West of homes, pathway , parking, one way traffic southbound, trees, second path / cycle, two lane light rail. This will add an additional \$4,500,000 in construction costs for this option which makes the viaduct option even more favoured.

However, if this option of retaining wall is deemed appropriate then there is no reason not to do the same up High Street instead. This would leave Alison Road and Wansey Road untouched. High Street has UNSW Administration and Sports Buildings all the way along the perimeter facing this proposed rail alignment and the Racecourse grounds on the other side, so environmental and community impacts are minimal. Prior to High Street the CSELR track is common which would save the cost of the track in Alison and Wansey and resolve most environmental and community issues with the CSLER in the Randwick area as well as saving costs.

Cost Impact of the Anson Land Acquisition for the Light Rail Stables

Finally, the Wansey Road Options all have the acquisition of the Anson property as their tram stabling area. This is a very major cost for a seemingly marginal benefit. We are informed by TNSW and RCC that as part of the RCC preferred alignment or the Viaduct option the tram stabling at the corner of High Street and Wansey Road on racecourse land is possible. This is detailed in the RCC EIS submission.

The figures for this are:

Viaduct Solution (with tram stabling on SE corner of racecourse)	Current Wansey Road Alignment
\$38,000,000 extra in construction of tram stabling site plus \$20,000,000 loan to the ATC for the horse stabling being built to replace existing stabling)	\$ 50,000,000 for the Anson Property, which is the latest reported figure by TNSW.
Plus \$16,000,000 in construction of Viaduct	Plus \$3,000,000 extra construction on Wansey Road
Minus TCorps assumed 2% margin on lending on ATC loan of \$20m to build stables for 10 years totalling\$4,000,000.	Minus \$18,361,200 of costed benefits forgone with this option.
\$70,000,000	\$71,,361,200

We are informed that racecourse interests will accept a loan to build their stables and we believe the figure could be as low as 20m, which is certainly a better community outcome than sending NSW resident taxpayers dollars off shore.

If this complete solution were achieved, with the Viaduct with tram stabling on the racecourse, everybody wins at a virtually cost neutral/cost positive scenario, and with all the benefits outlined in the WAG and RCC submission for the Viaduct solution.

Additionally, \$50,000,000 of NSW taxpayers money is not forgone to overseas interests but placed back into the Randwick and wider NSW community.

Conclusion

It is clear that any reasonable analysis of the Viaduct option needs to look at more than relative construction costs. The analysis we have been able to do with the limited resources available to us show a clear benefit for the Viaduct option. As a minimum the Department of Planning and Infrastructure should require Transport for NSW to complete this cost analysis of tangible and intangible benefits and present it and the Viaduct design and costings to the Light Rail stakeholders in the Randwick area. Only by doing this will the best option for the area be realised and the requirements of the EIS be properly met.

The Anson property acquisition seems to be a very major cost with a very marginal benefit. For such a major expenditure the other options that can we achieved with this money need to be examined in more detail and the Department of Planning and Infrastructure should ensure that Transport for NSW complete this analysis with rigorous attention to the detail.