

December 30, 2013

CSELR EIS SUBMISSION
Major Project Assessments
Department of Planning
23-33 Bridge Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

SUBMISSION TO TRANSPORT NSW FOR THE SOUTH EAST LIGHT RAIL

To whom it may concern,

I wish to voice my opposition for the proposed design of the CBD and South East Light Rail project (CSELR) as described in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) dated November 2013. I do not agree with the CSELR as stated in the CSELR EIS.

My main concerns with the selected route are:

- Choice of route
- Parking
- Traffic Management
- Area Beautification
- Noise/Size of Light Rail

Choice of route

As a resident of Surry Hills, I am not opposed to Light Rail however, I believe that the route selected for implementation has not been given due consideration of alternative routes. It is short sighted and does not appear to address the long-term structural transport issues for the state.

I also understand that the State Government has not seriously considered alternatives that have been put forward by highly qualified engineers for a faster, more efficient route. I specifically request that there is communication with the community as to why these routes have been discounted.

Communication with the community as to the motivation for the choice of route and why others have not been assessed is critical.

Parking

The removal of all the parking along Devonshire St. is not seriously being evaluated in the EIS. According to the EIS, around 180 car parks will be removed from Devonshire St. which will push those trying to park their cars to other parts of Surry Hills, where parking is already at a premium. It is naive to suggest that the parking will be alleviated because people will choose to use the Light Rail instead. People will still drive to Surry Hills, park and may catch the Light Rail to the city. The solutions put forward in the EIS are vague and don't address the main issue. For example, to widen the permit parking zones only transfers the problem to other areas of Surry Hills.

Parking needs to be seriously considered by the State Government.

Traffic management

The blocking of streets in Surry Hills will cause further congestion on Bourke, Cleveland and South Dowling and will shift traffic to other side streets in Surry Hills. The Cleveland St congestion is a real issue today that will be exacerbated by the proposed closure of streets.

Specifically, in the section from Bourke to Crown, the left in/left out rule for the lanes and side streets will add at least 15 mins to a trip trying to get onto the Eastern Distributor and will add traffic to Cleveland St. which is avoided today.

In addition, it has been suggested that Parkham Lane be opened onto Bourke St. This lane should remain closed to Bourke St as this will add additional traffic flow onto Bourke St particularly during school hours as parents drop their children off. If the lane is opened, the houses on Parkham St will constantly be circled by cars.

Traffic Management and flow needs to be evaluated by people that actually travel by car through the suburb to understand some of the unintended consequences of the current plan.

Beautification of the area

The City of Sydney has done a great job of beautifying the suburb. Despite the controversy surrounding the Bike paths, residents would agree that the plantings and beautification are one of the highlights. It would be a plight for the State Government to do a cheap and cheerful job of the Light Rail and to destroy the setting of Surry Hills.

Specifically, the area along Devonshire St through Wimbo Park should be retained as parkland and planted in a way that encourages use of the land. Today, Wimbo Park is frequented by residents with dogs and children, visitors to the area sitting in the sun and residents of an elderly age who enjoy the community and sit to engage in social interaction with their neighbours. Amenities to support these interactions must be put in place. A playground for children and parkland for people to enjoy are a must. In addition, the relocation of the mosaic is essential as we need to prevent the destruction of our history.

The Light Rail could be an advantage to the area if it is built sympathetically with the suburb and beautification is undertaken.

Noise/Size of Light rail

Upon reading the EIS, it is my understanding that the Light Rail Vehicles are going to be nearly double the size of the Inner West route. It is also my understanding that the acceptable noise levels have recently been changed by the State Government to allow Light rail to be at the noise levels of Heavy rail.

I specifically request that if the noise levels have been changed then adequate noise screening needs to be added to the project as this travels through a residential area.

In addition, I could not find the speed of the Light Rail in the EIS, however consideration needs to be given for a maximum speed through Surry Hills to ensure safety and noise reduction.

In summary, if the CSELR project is to proceed, I request that all possible routes be assessed and communicated to the community, so it is understood why a preferred route is the one that is sustainable as the best future transport option.

Yours sincerely