



News and Views of the residents of West Pennant Hills Valley.
P.O. Box 35 West Pennant Hills NSW 2125

A.B.N. 63 014 220 905

Submission to the North West Rail Link EIS 2
SSI-5414
3rd December 2012

Authors:
Margaret Whalen
Zenon Michniewicz

West Pennant Hills Valley Progress Association

The West Pennant Hills Valley Progress Association (WPHVPA) represents residents living south of Castle Hill Rd in an area that would be serviced by the proposed Cherrybrook Station. While the Association is supportive of the construction of the NWRL and wants it to operate successfully, the Association does not believe that the needs of our residents have been adequately addressed in the planning of this station.

Indeed, it is disappointing to read the information presented in the EIS 2 and realize that patronage from south of Castle Hill Road is barely considered, and when actually referred to, is often misleading or incorrect. The WPHV will experience extreme changes to both pedestrian and vehicular traffic flows, particularly throughout the construction phase as a result of the station implementation, yet little consideration has been given to our concerns.

Commuter concerns:

It is our view that all commuters using the NWRL will be concerned that the proposed interchange at Chatswood station will not be user friendly, especially that

1. there will be commuter congestion problems crossing the platform,
2. the trains they will be joining will be full
3. they will be required to wait for the next train
4. a trip involving two and more changes will be one change too many
5. there will be inadequate marshalling and security on the platform with so many trains running
6. the security personnel will not be present until the last train

As yet, these concerns have not been addressed thoroughly. They need to be resolved in a manner which gives the travelling public confidence or else the NWRL will prove unattractive and may be a failure.

The Association considers the proposal to cease a large number of the current commuter bus services to Sydney's economic corridor very short sighted. By the time the NWRL is operational, the demand for public transport will have increased significantly. It must be recognized that not all destinations will be served efficiently by the NWRL, for example, the Lane Cove bus interchange. It would be more appropriate to evaluate the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the bus network once the NWRL is operational, not now.

Castle Hill Rd:

Once Cherrybrook Station is operational, it will be important to maintain unhindered traffic flow along Castle Hill Road. With the addition of two sets of traffic lights plus the extra traffic generated by the Station, it will be necessary to ensure that all measures are taken to reduce the number of times that traffic on Castle Hill Rd is stopped by vehicles, buses and pedestrians trying to access the Station..

Accordingly, to maintain the smooth functioning of Castle Hill Rd, the Association would suggest that

1. grade separated pedestrian access from south of Castle Hill Rd be provided at Glenhope Rd
2. kiss and ride parking bays be provided on the south side of Castle Hill Rd within easy walking distance of the grade separated pedestrian access
3. bus bays on the south side of Castle Hill Rd be positioned in a similar location

An extra lane on the south side of Castle Hill Rd could be accommodated to allow these facilities by moving the northern edge of Castle Hill Rd during the station construction phase.

Grade separated pedestrian access is essential to prevent pedestrians taking risks to cross slow moving traffic, and thereby being a danger to themselves and a hazard to drivers.

The West Pennant Hills Valley.

It would appear that little consideration has been given to access to Cherrybrook Station from the WPHV. While it is appreciated that the majority of patronage for the NWRL will come from north of Castle Hill Rd, it is highly likely that there will be significant movement from the south. The misunderstanding by the EIS document of WPHV resident needs is well demonstrated by its assertions that the feeder roads serving the WPHV are Old Northern Rd and County Drive. Both these roads approach Castle Hill Rd from the north and do not serve the WPHV. It is therefore clear that the EIS has given no serious consideration of our access requirements to the Station.

For instance, the nominated route for the potential shuttle bus service from the WPHV has not been properly thought through. The problem is that Highs Road is two lanes at its intersection with Castle Hill Rd, and is only 2 lanes for about 30m when it reverts to one lane each way. Heading north or turning right at Castle Hill Rd is a challenge, with the green phase being barely enough to let 3 cars through. Due to the shortness of the lane, and the majority of the traffic heading west/left turn, traffic flow comes to a standstill, especially during the evening peak periods. A shuttle bus would be lucky to clear the intersection during the green phase in the morning peak and it would then sit in traffic until Franklin Rd. A much better option would be to access Castle Hill Rd via Glenhope Rd or Coonara Ave, drop off passengers in the proposed bus bay on the south side of Castle Hill Rd and return via Highs Rd. This would not only form a functional loop, it would also cover a greater area of the WPHV. In addition, there would be no need for the shuttle bus to enter the congested Station precinct. Likewise, kiss and ride patrons could avoid the Station precinct if there was a facility for them on the south side of Castle Hill Rd.

Local Traffic Implications

Castle Hill Rd is a significant arterial link. Whenever traffic flow is interrupted or delayed, traffic then heads into the local residential areas seeking a way around the disruption. It is therefore expected that the installation of traffic lights at the intersection of Glenhope Rd/ Castle Hill Rd will increase traffic flow through the WPHV. Furthermore, as construction activity gets underway and heavy vehicles interrupt normal traffic operations along Castle Hill Rd, vehicles will seek to avoid this route. In particular eastward and south bound traffic will use Highs Rd to avoid delays along Castle Hill Rd. and then use the local WPHV rat run to either cross/access North Rocks Rd or head to the M2. Traffic travelling from the south or east will be doing the reverse, 24 hrs/day 7 days/week. Currently, the residents of the WPHV endure heavy congestion during the morning and evening peak periods and once construction begins, this will likely extend throughout the day.

Conclusion:

In order to achieve a better outcome for residents of the WPHV than that currently offered by the EIS, the Association suggests that the following issues be addressed:

1. Unsatisfactory arrangements for commuters at Chatswood station be resolved
2. Better access arrangements for WPHV residents from south of Castle Hill Rd be provided in the manner outlined above.
3. Evaluate bus services once the NWRL is operational