North West Rail Link
Environmental Impact Statement 2
Application Number: SS1-5414
Franklin Road Station, Cherrybrook

Submission by:
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Dear Director,

I support the building of the North West Rail Link but I would like to see every opportunity taken to relieve congestion and make it easier to get around.

Comments made are in relation to the Franklin Road Station in Cherrybrook.

The traffic on Castle Hill Rd, especially in the morning peak period can be dreadful. It is not uncommon for traffic to be banked back from Pennant Hills Road to past Coonara Ave, especially in February and March. The traffic through the West Pennant Hills Valley can also extend along Oakes, Aiken, Taylor and Highs Rd. I need to leave at least ½ hr even by road to get my kids to school at Thompsons Corner – in the same suburb! Once it took about 1hr by road – but I can walk there in 35 minutes!

The station at Franklin Rd at Cherrybrook may reduce this traffic but it also may increase it. The extra traffic lights planned at Glenhope and Roberts Rd will slow the flow of traffic along Castle Hill Rd leading to traffic bank ups past Highs Rd and possibly even to Old Northern Rd. Such a bank up will encourage people to drive instead through the West Pennant Hills Valley and exacerbate the traffic bank ups we have some days through the Valley. This traffic bank up will be worse if pedestrians are also using these lights. I have often see in the city the hold ups which are caused when pedestrians cross after the lights which also leads to motorists running red lights. These problems could be avoided if a pedestrian bridge was built over Castle Hill Rd as we have at Thompsons Corner. Not only would motorists not be further held up by pedestrians crossing but pedestrians and cyclists would benefit by not being held up by motorists.

A pedestrian bridge would also allow for a circular bus route through the valley. Buses could come up Highs Rd as indicated and drop off in the access road as planned but then continue east on Castle Hill Road and turn right into Coonara Ave. In the opposite direction a bridge would allow a bus to operate in the reverse direction turning left out of Coonara Ave, dropping passengers opposite the station on Castle Hill Rd to cross using the bridge before continuing to turn left into Highs Rd. These bi-directional buses would then serve both ends of the Valley rather than people coming from the far end of the Valley all the way to Highs Rd to access the station by bus. Highs Rd itself can suffer from traffic bank ups from Castle Hill Rd also which these buses would be caught in. Buses in both directions would ease this problem as passengers could choose which direction would be most efficient for them. If this bus is not efficient for passengers then it will not be much used. A pedestrian bridge would also have benefits for kiss and ride passengers who could then also be dropped on the opposite side of Castle Hill Road to the station further reducing traffic hold ups for east bound traffic on Castle Hill Rd. Without this bridge the station and Castle Hill Road will be more congested with these people also traveling all the way into the station.

The EIS notes that only a small number of cyclists use Castle Hill Rd. Castle Hill Rd, like most major roads, is not a nice road to cycle on so most ordinary people do not cycle on it. But to either

side of Castle Hill Rd the terrain can be steep which is also difficult to cycle on. To encourage commuters to cycle to the station cycle paths should be provided on Castle Hill Road otherwise cycle access for ordinary people would be rather difficult. Cycle paths would make cycling to the station a much more attractive option for the average person and would reduce the number of cars traveling in the area thus limiting traffic bank ups. Cycle lanes in the side streets for those coming from those directions would also make cycling a more attractive option.

Given the difficulties faced by passengers access to the station needs to be easy. With only single deck trains servicing the station the number of seats on the train will be limited. Then there is the change of trains at Chatswood where there it is also unlikely there will be seats on the train. It is a long journey to stand for. There is also the cost of the trains. Under the current pricing I pay about $10 a day on the bus or $10 a day on the train. But the train fare does not include getting to the station which adds at least another $2 to the fare, either to catch a bus to the station or take my bicycle on the train. The bus fare does include a second bus fare to go from the city to Camperdown. A more average passenger going from Cherrybrook to the city would only pay $3.60 each way, $7.20 return. Catching the train from Cherrybrook will add extra transport costs for passengers. Catching a train from Cherrybrook (or beyond) is also not an attractive option for those going to the south of the city. This involves changing trains at Epping which adds extra time to the journey, although if passengers swap to an all-stations train they would at least get a seat for the longer journey.

We have missed our opportunity to build the NWRL as a rail line in the middle of the M2 as they have done in Perth. Let's not miss any more opportunities to make getting around easier. May we take this opportunity to improve our transport system as much as possible rather than build another place of congestion.

Regards,

Nicole

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