

NORTH WEST RAIL LINK
Application Number SSI-5414

We are thrilled and delighted to see work finally commencing on a rail link to Castle Hill and the suburbs beyond. We have several issues which at this stage make our support less than wholehearted

- We hear your assurance that there will be very frequent trains in a metro style. However this won't translate into a frequent service to the city if we have to change at Chatswood as there will not be trains coming through Chatswood at the same frequency to connect with the Nor west trains. Or will there be? The trains on the North Shore line do not come through every five minutes now. Our experience is that when passengers have to connect with another service – either another train or a bus the efficiency and appeal of the service is decreased as there is always the potential for delays if connections are missed. This problem exists now for passengers travelling from Hornsby to Strathfield as you have to change trains at Epping. It is either a mad scramble to get down the escalators in time for the connecting train or a long tedious wait for the next train on The Northern Line.
- How adequate is the provision for commuter car parking? The provision for commuter parking on the M2 is pathetically inadequate. There is no car park at Oakes Rd and the one at Barclay Rd fills up very early in the morning. 4000 spaces sounds like a lot but not when it is broken down for each of the five stations where parking will be provided. How does the number of car parking spaces compare with the projected passenger numbers? What percentage of passengers is expected to drive to the stations with car parks? As there is no medium or high density housing near to these stations one would assume that the percentage will be quite high.
- We are very concerned that the community will finally get a railway line but the cost will be the loss of The Hills Centre. This building was built and opened to great fanfare in 1988 as a Bicentennial project. It is a community space with excellent acoustics and facilities and there is nothing comparable in the district. It is appalling that so much community and government money was invested for it now to be demolished only twenty four years later. We can't imagine what future generations will think about a community which squandered a cultural resource so easily. I hear that it is to save the Showground which of course is another great community resource but why should this community have to choose between two valuable community resources? We hear that the Council Chambers is moving to NorWest. Why can't the Chambers be demolished for the railway station and car park?

Jennifer Farrer and Peter Consandine
PO Box 843
Castle Hill 1765