

Ordinary Council Meeting 20 June 2016
SYDNEY METRO EIS - CHATSWOOD TO SYDENHAM

Subject: Sydney Metro EIS - Chatswood to Sydenham
Record No: SU5891 - 36554/16
Division: Open Space and Urban Services Division
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Executive Summary

This report outlines Council's proposed response to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Chatswood to Sydenham section of Sydney Metro, which includes new metro stations at Crows Nest. The EIS has two (2) main impacts on Lane Cove, the proposed reconfiguration of the Pacific Highway and Mowbray Road West intersection and the new Crows Nest Station opposite Council's St Leonards Commercial Precinct. The impacts primarily relate to traffic and the need to better integrate with Council's planning in St Leonards. It is recommended Council make a submission on the EIS in terms of the report.

Background

The overall aim of the Sydney Metro is to provide additional capacity along the "global economic corridor". The next stage of Sydney Metro City & Southwest is underway with the community asked to provide input to the Chatswood to Sydenham Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) <http://sydneymetro.info/chatswood-to-sydenham>.

The Environmental Impact Statement specifically addresses the Chatswood to Sydenham section of Sydney Metro, which includes new metro stations at Crows Nest, Victoria Cross in North Sydney, Barangaroo, Martin Place, Pitt Street, Central and Waterloo. The planning approvals process for the upgrade of the existing railway line to Bankstown will start later this year.

Project features include:-

- »»About 15.5 kilometres of twin rail tunnels (that is, two tunnels located side-by-side) between the northern dive structure and Bedwin Road, Marrickville (the Marrickville dive structure);
- New metro stations at Crows Nest, Victoria Cross, Barangaroo, Martin Place, Pitt Street and Waterloo, as well as new underground platforms at Central Station;
- Realignment of T1 North Shore Line surface track within the existing rail corridor between Chatswood Station and Brand Street, Artarmon, including a new bridge for a section of the 'down' (northbound) track to pass over the proposed Chatswood dive structure;
- About 250 metres of new aboveground metro tracks between Chatswood Station and the Chatswood dive structure;
- A northern dive structure (about 400 metres in length) and tunnel portal just north of Mowbray Road, Chatswood;
- A substation (for traction power supply) at Artarmon;
- A southern dive structure (about 400 metres in length) and tunnel portal north of Sydenham Station and south of Bedwin Road, Marrickville; and

- A services facility (for traction power supply and an operational water treatment plant) adjacent to the southern dive structure.

Discussion

The EIS has two main impacts on Lane Cove, the proposed reconfiguration of the Pacific Highway and Mowbray Road West intersection and the proposed Crows Nest Station opposite Council's St Leonards Commercial Precinct.

Reconfiguration of Pacific Highway and Mowbray Road West

Nelson Street, Chatswood is currently used as part of a G Turn to access Mowbray Road west of the Pacific Highway. The EIS models the option of providing twin right turn southbound bays from the Pacific Highway westbound into Mowbray Road to replace the G Turn manoeuvre for southbound traffic into Mowbray Road via Nelson Street.

The Traffic report and EIS is silent on traffic volumes or the impact of additional traffic on Mowbray Road west of Pacific Highway from either one or two right turn lanes being proposed. The expected impact of opening up Mowbray Road westbound to even more traffic is considered unacceptable given the existing levels of congestion. Mowbray Road is already at capacity as it carries over 14,000 vehicle per day. Its intersection with Centennial Avenue already needs additional capacity, it is proposed as a regional bike route, and is generally only two lane two way for much of its length incorporating periodic traffic calming installed as part of the Lane Cove Tunnel project. Facilitating additional westbound traffic onto Mowbray Road would also be contrary to the Government's commitments on the Lane Cove Tunnel as it would encourage traffic to use it and bypass the tunnel. As such, the additional twin right turn lanes are not supported.

If there is to be any reconfiguration of the intersection, a right turn bay from Mowbray Road to Pacific Highway (eastbound to southbound) should be provided. Council has been seeking this for many years, but has to date has been declined by the RMS. This change is recommended for the following reasons:-

- Currently in the am peak hours, city bound traffic turn left at Centennial or Parklands Avenue to proceed east. As Epping Road is already at capacity due to limited number of trafficable lane, there are long traffic queues in Centennial and Parklands Avenues waiting to feed into Epping Road. The proposal will provide an alternate option to the Lane Cove north residents avoiding Epping Road and taking an alternate route to city such as Mowbray Road West – Pacific Highway – Freeway. This will significantly improve the traffic congestions in the area.
- Due to traffic congestion at Epping Road/ Centennial Avenue intersection, currently Lane Cove north residents suffers from 'rat running' issues such as Karilla Ave – Kurri St – Kyong St – Landers Rd – Parklands Ave. As such, the proposal would ease the existing 'rat running' issues and improve residential amenities to the Lane Cove north precinct.
- There are in excess of 1,000 residential units being constructed at the Lane Cove north precinct. Therefore, an alternate travel route is required for the future residents as the existing road network is already at capacity in the area.

For the above reasons, Council should request the inclusion of a right turn movement from Mowbray Road West to Pacific Highway as part of any change to the traffic lights.

Crows Nest Station

One of the aims of the EIS is to “Drive productivity through integrated transport and land use planning”, however the EIS doesn’t adequately address Council’s recent planning for:

- St Leonards South precinct,
- Development approvals for properties either side of Friedlander Place;
- Development approvals / proposals for either side of St Leonards Station; and
- The improvements to the south side of St Leonards Station (other than incorrectly saying that the Government rejected an unsolicited proposal)

By not addressing these important land use planning matters in the EIS, it has failed to take a holistic approach to the Crows Nest / St Leonards precinct and properly consider:-

- a) Traffic impacts at the Pacific Highway / Oxley Street intersection west of the Pacific Highway for which no assessment has been reported. These impacts are both construction and operational post developments.
- b) Cumulative construction impacts, noting that excavation for the developments either side of Friedlander Place is likely in the same timeframe as excavation for the Crows Nest Station
- c) Pedestrian linkages proposed between St Leonards Station and Oxley Street (West Side). In Council’s Planning in the Friedlander Precinct it has strived to provide a pedestrian pathway linking the proposed park and plaza over the rail corridor, with the proposed retail between Lithgow and Christie Street and south to Friedlander Place and Oxley Street. There needs to be consideration given to extending this pedestrian connectivity to the new station.

Conclusion

The expansion of the Sydney Metro has two (2) main impacts on Lane Cove, the proposed reconfiguration of the Pacific Highway and Mowbray Road West intersection and the new Crows Nest Station opposite Council’s St Leonards Commercial Precinct. The traffic impacts identified in the EIS are of concern as they have not had regard to the flow on effects to the Lane Cove LGA. In addition there is an opportunity to better integrate the new Crows Nest station with Council’s planning for St Leonards. It is recommended Council make a submission on the EIS in terms of the report.

RECOMMENDATION

That:-

1. The report be received and noted; and
2. Council make a submission on the EIS in terms of the report, in particular in relation to the traffic impacts identified, as the EIS has not had regard to the flow on effects to the Lane Cove LGA and the need to better integrate the new Crows Nest station with Council’s planning for St Leonards.

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ATTACHMENTS:

There are no supporting documents for this report.