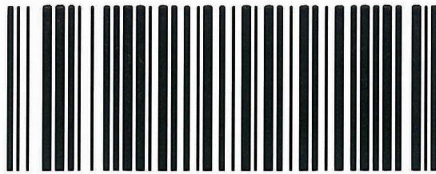


Robert Road Action Group
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PCU034001

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An objection to Robert Road Cherrybrook being utilised by the North West Rail Link (NWRL) proposal as a footprint for a "Feeder Road" with increased traffic flows by way of Buses and general traffic. My name is Malcolm Bargh, and with my partner Lynda Casey, we have resided at 2 Louise Way Cherrybrook NSW 2126 for the last four (4) years.

We along with other residents both from within Louise Way and along Robert Road became aware of a proposal to make Robert Road a "Feeder Road" with increased traffic flow from Bus routes and general traffic in conjunction with the NWRL.

Both Lynda and I strongly object to this proposal and are objections are outlined as;

1. Lack of Road Width on Robert Road as opposed to surrounding roads
2. Volume of traffic
3. Damage to Robert Road surfaces
4. Excessive noise in a quiet residential street
5. Safety factors including access to Robert Park



Item 1.

The current routes for both Private (Hills Bus) and Government Bus travel in both directions in the near vicinity to Robert Road travel along **County Drive**, turning into **John Road**, (passing the northern end of Robert Road), **Franklin Road** at the round-about, **Neale Avenue** and **Edward Bennett Drive** before turning back onto Castle Hill Road. Some buses also travel along County Drive before turning onto Castle Hill Road at the traffic lights.

County Drive is a major thoroughfare that carries a large volume of traffic particularly in peak times. The road was designed as a four (4) lane road and is situated between New Line and Castle Hill Roads. For much of its length there is also a tree planted median strip in the middle. Recently, and against much local protesting, this major roadway was for much of its length reduced from a four (4) lane roadway to a two (2) lane roadway using the term "traffic calming."

The lane markings on the road surface has the lane divider at 3.5 metres for the carriageway lane and the non-flow (gutter) lane which is used mainly used by the residence of County Drive for parking and the buses to allow passengers to embark/disembark is set at 3 metres in width. Total carriageway width either side of the median strip is 6.5 metres.

At this point in the objection I would like to add, that the current buses which frequent the roads in this report are **12 metres in length and 2.5 metres in width.**

John Road which runs basically east-west between County Drive and Franklin Road is for much of its length 10 metres in width and can accommodate passing traffic, including buses as well as allowing for legally parked vehicles on both sides of the roadway. There is however a short portion of the road that is steeply graded close to the Franklin Road round-about. This narrow portion of John Road

is only 5.3 metres in width and is a straight section passing very close to a timber boundary fence of an undeveloped passage of land which is on the southern side of the road.

The double unbroken lanes lines are set at, 2.8 metres for lane width for downhill traffic and 2.5 metres for the uphill traffic. There is virtually zero room for passing where two (2) buses meet on this dangerous portion of the road. In time, this land may be sold or resumed to complete the 10 metre road width so as to make it safer and uniform for its entire length.

I will return to Franklin Road later in this report.

Neale Avenue is a sloping and slightly curving section of roadway that runs east-west between Franklin Road and Edward Bennett Drive. It is also 10 metres in width for its entire length and has unbroken separation lines in much of the length marked on the road surface. It is worthy of mention that the double lines are not consistent with the middle of the carriageway along its length and vary in lane width depending on the curving of the road. This has no doubt been done to allow the buses to travel along the road surface and pass vehicles legally parked without or predominately NOT crossing the unbroken separation lane lines.

Edward Bennet Drive is the same as both Neale Avenue and John Road in its 10 metre width which continues all the way until it intersects back with Castle Hill Road at the traffic lights. Interestingly, the unbroken double centre lines are again not consistent with the centre of the carriageway where the road surface bends, again allowing for the buses to pass the legally parked vehicles without crossing to the incorrect side of the road.

Franklin Road travels between New Line Road in the north, (Closed off) and Castle Hill Road at its southern end which is expected to have traffic lights added under the proposal for NWRL. The portion of the roadway which I will make mention of in this report, refers to the section of road from the Neale Avenue intersection near the top of John Road and the intersection with Castle Hill Road.

Situated on the eastern side of the roadway approximately 100 metres south of the Neale Avenue intersection is Tangara School for girls ranging in classes from Year 3 to year 12. On the same side and close to the intersection with Castle Hill Road is "Inala" special school. On the western side of Neale Avenue is "Dulkara" which is also part of Inala.

The northern portion of Franklin Road, south of the intersection of Neale Avenue begins at a width of 10 metres. After that and heading towards Castle Hill Road, Franklin Road changes width at various points. Opposite a bus embark/disembark area outside Tangara School the road surface is 10 metres in width and also has an extra concrete area to allow buses to be parked along it and still allow the 10 metre wide area, but the centre broken lines painted on the road is only 3 metres from the eastern side, which means that with legally parked cars, traffic has to cross to the incorrect side to pass.

Further along Franklin Road outside "Dulkara" the width reduces to 8.8 metres and it continues to decrease until the area around the intersection of Kayla Way where it is 7.8 metres. At this stage of the road, there are signs erected along Franklin Road on the western side which display "No Stopping on School Days 8am to 4pm". Also further along the road, there is an undeveloped area on the eastern side where there is no kerb and gutter and the road width has further reduced to only 5.5 metres.

Although Franklin Road's width varies from 5.5 metres to 10 metres in width, at this point in time there is a significant amount of building associated with improvements to Tangara School, which could ultimately increase the road's width. If a line of sight is taken along both sides of Franklin

Road, a total road width of 10 metres or more seems quite possible without resuming any privately owned land in the process.

NWRL's also indicated that it proposes to install traffic lights at the intersection of Franklin Road and Castle Hill Road which when combined with the potential to widen to 10 metres the remaining portions of Franklin Road, make it an obvious choice to handle the extra traffic which would be generated with NWRL's proposal as the buses are already using a portion of Franklin Road for the school children.

There is only one (1) housing complex (Kayla Way) and three (3) other streets running off Franklin Road which services a total of 90 residential blocks.

Robert Road runs between John Road at its northern end and at its southern end, has a "Left Turn Only" onto Castle Hill Road. It is a mainly straight section of road and has a width of 7 metres for the most part of its length, except for a slight widening to 7.2 metres near the intersection with John Road. There is a section of this road at the bottom of the hill opposite the creek where it narrows down to 6 metres as it snakes through a chicane that has double unbroken separation lines on it. At this point in time there are no parking restrictions to speak of and the area is marked with 50KPH speed restrictions.

There are currently four (4) housing complexes, (Cherry Haven Way, Oliver Way, Louise Way, Arundel Way and three (3) other housing complexes/private roads, Robert Park, five (5) other streets running off Robert Road and a proposed large housing development on the eastern side of Robert Road south of the creek. Robert Road services a total of 265 residential blocks.

The main/private roads into these residential "Way" complexes off Robert Road are quite narrow with most down to as little as 5 metres or less in width. There is minimal room to park guest or other cars within their complexes, so on many occasions Robert Road experiences an increase of parked cars on both sides of the road accordingly. The width of a small to medium motor vehicle is approximately two (2) metres and when cars are parked on both sides of Robert Road, there is only room for one vehicle at a time to slowly pass through the remaining 3 metres of the roadway. If again the width of a vehicle the size of a bus at 2.5 metres is put into the 3 metre space then it leaves no more than 250mm each side of clearance. If bigger vehicles or more vehicles are parked on Robert Road, then it may well become impassable to any traffic. Ultimately if this proposal were to proceed then a constant amount of damage will be encountered to all vehicles and the cost to the owners will be in devalued cars, lost time and increased premiums.

The placement of "No Stopping" signs on one or both sides of Robert Road to increase traffic flow in this narrow street will do nothing but increase parking problems for the current residents of the area.

Robert Road is mostly "built out" and the only way to increase the width of this carriageway would be to remove the pedestrian footpaths and or resume people's property. This would enable the road surface to be widened enough to support larger vehicular traffic. This proposed increase in traffic flow will completely destroy the real estate values of the area. The idea of resuming property, decreasing or removing the footpaths is expensive, dangerous to pedestrians, likely to destroy the quiet landscape and for residents this is not an option.

There must be no vehicular access out of the western end of Cherrybrook Railway Station and onto Robert Road.

Summary of item 1.

The current bus routes in the area concerned around the NWRL proposal all have a road width in each direction of between 5 to 6.5 metres. (10 to 12 metres in total road surface width) Franklin Road when completed with the school building works and with the addition of the correct kerb alignment to it total length can easily accommodate 5 metres in each direction. (10 metres in total) Robert Road without major modification/property resuming/removal of footpaths/the addition of unnecessary and drastic parking changes, has an inadequate road width of 7 metres and is totally unsuited for buses or increased traffic flow.

The decision to have the majority of County Drive as a one lane main road for ("Traffic calming") in each direction is absurd when NWRL's proposal is taken into consideration. County Drive is already a main thoroughfare that was designed as a 4 lane road. Instead of turning off County Drive into John Road, the buses should continue along County Drive to Castle Hill Road and then turn into the Cherrybrook Railway Station at the proposed traffic lights at Franklin Road.

An alternative is to also re-align the footpath and fix the roadway, post school construction in Franklin Road and have the buses and increased traffic flow use the NWRL's proposed traffic lights at Castle Hill and Franklin Roads.

Another possible scenario is to adopt one or both of the above paragraphs, and re-open the closed northern end of Franklin Road where it meets New Line Road by installing traffic lights to assist with traffic flow. Franklin Road at this northern end is already a 10 metre wide road and no other work is required to have it able to take on the extra volume of traffic.

Item 2.

The volume of traffic which currently uses Robert Road is typical for this type of road. It is able to support resident's vehicles with the odd delivery/postal/removal vehicle and a weekly waste transfer service. It is on the whole not used by drivers to short cut their route in peak hours instead of travelling along County Drive and turning left onto Castle Hill Road as no additional gain is really achieved.

Recently, Police were forced to direct traffic from Castle Hill Road around a motor vehicle collision and down Robert Road to avoid the crash site. The time of the collision was not in peak times and the increase in traffic flow, coupled with the bottleneck caused by two way traffic having to negotiate around parked cars, which effectively made Robert Road a single lane road, caused a complete traffic problem which took a considerable time to clear. Local residents would be unable to enjoy a quiet street that they had when they purchased into the area.

The roads that the current bus routes take around the area are better able to support the proposed massive increase in traffic over the Robert Road proposal. Couple this to the proposed car park at the Cherrybrook Railway Station and the outcome will be a road that cannot handle the volume or type of traffic expected in NWRL's proposal.

Item 3.

Robert Road is a typical roadway contained within the Hornsby Shire. It was never intended as a major arterial road within the network and indeed has a speed limited to 50 KPH. This type of speed limit, coupled with the narrow 7 metre road width is usually associated with a quiet residential

street and not a busy road thoroughfare. Many of the dwellings along Robert Road and the surrounding streets are between 15 and 20 years of age.

The road bitumen road surface is reasonable to good in condition and supports mainly light traffic with the occasional heavier vehicle. It is clearly visible on some sections of the roadway, where there has been some settling of the compacted aggregate under the tarred surface, causing the roadway to subside. This has caused cracking of the top tar coating. A possible cause of this developing problem could be the weekly waste disposal trucks standing stationary for periods of several minutes to empty the local resident's bins. It is immediately obvious that whatever the reason for the road's deterioration, it is simply not up to the task of being able to handle heavy vehicles, such as buses and increased traffic flow for any extended period of time.

The mere 7 metre width of the roadway will also over time have an effect on the gutter edging of the road as it will become damaged from large vehicle tyres hitting the edge as they navigate along the narrow street whether or not there are parked vehicles. The road unless it is completely ripped up, widened, a firmer aggregate base or concreted with layers of tar placed over the top of it, at enormous expense cannot simply handle the increase in traffic. The extra weight and vibration will further unsettle of the road's foundation and the NWRL's proposal will only increase the problem. In short, Robert Road is unsuitable for heavy and increased traffic flow.

Item 4.

Excessive noise from Heavy Vehicles such as Buses and other increases in traffic flow will destroy the predominately quiet suburban street. Constant accelerating and braking due to the traffic conditions, parked vehicles and pedestrian traffic will increase the noise factor substantially. A huge increase in vehicle emissions both petrol and diesel will have an adverse effect on the air quality in the narrow street and further damage the health of many of the elderly residents in many of the "Way" complexes along Robert Road.

Item 5.

If NWRL's proposal is successful to increase traffic flow and bring buses along Robert Road, then it will become extremely dangerous for children to play in Robert Park. It is the only park in the vicinity for well over 350 residential dwellings in the area and is constantly used 7 days a week from morning to night by both individual to groups of children of all young ages. Some children arrive by walking, some ride bikes, and some come with adults in motor vehicles. They play ball games on the grass area outside the fencing, ride bikes around the concrete pathways or play inside the fenced play equipment area.

The parents that arrive by car, park on Robert Road unstrap their children from child restraints and then take them to play. It will take only one child to run, chase a ball, not look on their bike or some other scenario and the consequences will be fatal. There is also no "Off street" parking for parents when they come to the park, so it is all done on Robert Road or its side street.

With the increase in traffic volume and heavy vehicles there will be a major potential for traffic to collide with a stationary vehicle which will have dire consequences. Crossing Robert Road to both go to and leave the park will also become much more dangerous and at present there is only one (1) street light for the entire area surrounding the park, which means in low light it may be extremely dangerous to see small children playing.

The proposal to use Robert Road by the NWRL proposal must be declined on this simple safety factor alone.

We can be contacted on the mobile numbers and email addresses supplied if you wish to discuss many of the matters raised in this objection.

Malcolm Bargh

Lynda Casey