

Mr [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Department of Planning and Environment  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear [REDACTED]

**RE: Sydenham to Bankstown Environmental Impact Statement**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Sydenham to Bankstown rail corridor. NSW Health makes the following submission for your consideration.

NSW Health has focused its response to matters directly related to health. The main issues identified by NSW Health with potential direct health impacts are potential noise and vibration and air quality.

**Potential noise and vibration impacts**

There is emerging evidence of the health impacts of environmental noise. The evidence is strongest for impacts on cardiovascular disease and sleep disturbance. Measures to limit community exposure to noise are therefore important to protect public health.

Potential noise and vibration impacts have been assessed with consideration given to sensitive noise 'receivers' such as residential and institutional premises. During the construction phase, there are a number of affected receivers including in Bankstown (Noise Catchment Areas 11, 12 & 13) that will, over the short term, be exposed to high levels of construction noise. It is also predicted construction activities which result in sleep disturbance will occur in Bankstown, affecting the NCA11 and NCA13 areas which are dominated by residential premises. It is important that all reasonable and feasible measures are taken to minimise construction noise exposure for local residents. Scheduling of works to avoid or minimise night time construction noise is important for minimising sleep disturbance. The EIS states that noise and vibration events, including potential sleep disturbance impacts, are to be managed as per the Sydney Metro Construction Noise and Vibration Strategy.

There are a number of residential premises that may be exposed to excessive noise during the operational phase at Bankstown around the rail line and the corridor, including multi-level residential buildings. It is important that all reasonable and feasible measures are taken to reduce the impact of operational noise on these identified residential premises, particularly night time noise which would result in sleep disturbance.

**Air quality**

Air quality is assessed as most at risk during construction phase owing to dust emissions, however the EIS demonstrates compliance of predicted air quality impacts with NSW EPA requirements (23.1 of Volume 1B).

All reasonable and feasible measures should be taken to minimise exposure to dust emissions for local residents during the construction phase.

In the operational phase, there is likely to be a net benefit to air quality due to a diminished call for motor vehicle usage as compared to a scenario without the project.

### **Impact of additional public transportation**

We support the opportunity for this project to service the growing demand for public transportation in Sydney. According to Litman (2011)<sup>1</sup>, high quality public transportation and transit oriented development can affect travel activity in ways that provide large health benefits, including reduced traffic crashes and pollution emissions, increased physical fitness, improved mental health, improved access to medical care and healthy food, and increased affordability which reduces financial stress to low-income households.

The proposed service frequency, described as 'timetable-free', should result in rising metro train patronage in the corridor which will yield broader social benefits that will arise from a reduced reliance upon private motor vehicles.

### **Active transport**

NSW Health supports development of the Active Transport Corridor along the length of the rail line from Sydenham to Bankstown stations. The early completion of this cycleway/walkway would help promote active transport.

Bicycle access and parking on interchanges will further contribute to cleaner air and an increase in physical activity.

The appendix to this letter provides further specific comments on the EIS.

I trust this information is of assistance. Should you require any further information please contact Dr Stephen Conaty, Director Population Health, South Western Sydney Local Health District on 8738 5718.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K Chant".

**Dr Kerry Chant PSM  
Chief Health Officer and Deputy Secretary  
Population and Public Health**

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<sup>1</sup> Litman T. "Evaluating Public Transportation Health Benefits". Victoria Transport Policy Institute for the American Public Transportation Association, 2011.

## Appendix A

### Specific comments

The following additional specific comments and recommendations are also made regarding the Sydenham to Bankstown EIS:

Section/Heading/Page Number	Comments/Recommendations
Appendix C 3.3.4 Bicycle movement	The design guidelines stipulate that priority is given to bicycle safety at road interfaces. There is concern regarding cyclist safety at the bus interchange and layover area on South Terrace. The cycle path finishes abruptly at the bus layover area and there is no allowance for cyclist access into the station from the west. To avoid conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists and vehicles and cyclists, consideration should be given in the plans around the Bankstown Station for off-road cyclist access from all directions, not just the south east along the active transport corridor.
4.2.5 Station Service Facilities	We recommend that the opportunity is taken to include water refill stations within the design guidelines for all of the Metro stations along the line. This is an important link to NSW Health <sup>2</sup> and Sydney Water's focus on addressing overweight and obesity by promoting water as the drink of choice, and should be seen as an important strategy for waste reduction within all Metro stations
Vol 1B. Section 28.4.2, Page 604 of 666  Vol 1C. 3.3.4 Bicycle Movement Page 80 (or 92 of 574)  Pages 121-122 of 666 & T06 Page 610 of 666.	NSW Health recommends consideration of the station precinct design to optimise multimodal transport, including provision for bicycle storage, bicycle sharing, and affordable and accessible motor vehicle parking to encourage active transport and uptake of metro travel.
Technical paper 1- Traffic, Transport and Access	NSW Health requests that additional consideration be given to alternative parking in proximity to health care facilities during the construction phase, for example around Bankstown Community Health Centre. Past experiences have shown that construction workers arrive very early and consume existing parking places, resulting in significant negative impact on access to health facilities by the public.

<sup>2</sup> NSW Health. NSW Healthy Eating and Active Living Strategy: Preventing overweight and obesity in NSW 2013-2018. Sydney, 2013. Available at: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/health/Publications/nsw-healthy-eating-strategy.pdf>