

re. MOD-w2 Rozelle Bay/ The Crescent/ Rozelle Bay Station area
13 May 2020

We are pleased to take this opportunity to maintain contact.

We note as positive certain schematic changes that have been made at your end, specifically: lowering the overpass, retaining the road crossing at Johnston Street and The Crescent, and improving the look of the green bridge linking Rozelle Bay LR station and the new parklands. These items are all noted with approval.

Nevertheless, **significant and serious problems remain**. With the removal of Buruwan Park four issues have become more apparent even than previously. The order of the following is not reflective of their priority. All are important.

- 1 Heat and wind
- 2 Noise
- 3 Enhanced factor value of bicycles, pedestrians and the aged
- 4 Notions of locality and local identity

1 Heat and wind

With the advent of this recent devastating summer, the first season to occur without the green buffer of Buruwan Park, it was clear to all residents at the northern tip of the Annandale ridge that the trees had served effectively as a buffer for wind flowing uphill from the low land between Annandale and Rozelle. The air filled with grit and ash from fires; this would at least partially have been stopped by the tall ficus trees and their surrounding evergreens, and the park's natural cooling influence was also absent. And of course the park was not available for respite, either for leisure at the beginning and end of the day, nor for transiting cyclists. Nothing in the EIS proposal will have any comparable effect in future summers.

The wind is not limited to summer. In the almost-year since the park was destroyed the road surfaces of Annandale, Pritchard and Breillat Streets, Bayview Crescent and Railway Parade have seen an accumulation of blown leaves and other decayed green and non-green waste, clogging gutters and drains and forcing significantly more maintenance of home frontages. The street trees have also suffered wear and tear from stronger winds. Even more important than these things, changes in wildlife patterns have been severe. Birds, possums and bats forcibly evicted from the park have moved to other sites in the vicinity for sanctuary, damaging the gardens of our home and neighboring homes by eating leaves (circuit-breaking photosynthesis) and defecating acidic waste, with results that have rapidly damaged the spider-frog-mosquito equilibrium. Our much-used garden has become inhospitable, unless we opt for synthetic surfaces and fixtures. The landscaping visible in the proposal, though seemingly picturesque, will not support a similar habitat for the confused and sometimes manic wildlife.

2 Noise

The current round-the-clock construction noise may be temporary, but to we in the vicinity it offers a stark simulation of the permanent mode of the interchange. The proposed green level of development, visually pleasing as it may be, will not match the sound shadow previously provided by clustered mature trees. More work

To address both of the above points significantly more landscaping will be required, including in strategic locations mature growth.

3 Enhanced factor value of bicycles, pedestrians and the aged

The Covid-19 crisis has had well-known positive effects in some neighborhoods. Local residents that formerly met in Buruwan Park now meet strolling the streets. Walking and cycling have become a greater part of local life, and with normalcy these will not subside to previous levels.

I understand that the design offers significant opportunities for fit cyclists and walkers. However social distancing customs will remain in mind well into the future, and are quite likely to be regulated periodically. This can only mean more personal space for people not in transport.

Furthermore, with so many people recently visible in the public realm it has become much more clear that there are many aged residents among us, who might otherwise have remained out of sight in their homes. For them in particular – and we in coming years - the interchange with its raised and constant traffic, tunnel vents, complex movement routes, likely congestion of bodies and bicycles around the station (a crucial facility) represents a diminishment of quality of life. The environmental design means to offset this that have not yet been implemented with full intelligence.

Given the long-term economic impact of Covid-19 it does not make sense to direct all energies towards a future Western Harbour Tunnel at the expense of contemporary amenity. As has long suggested by the local member of NSW Parliament and others with expertise, if an underpass with slot trench approaches were considered this stop-start consultation process would be more streamlined.

4 Refreshed notions of locality and local identity

The loss of Buruwan Park, the Covid effect, and what might be called maturing of cultural landscape awareness have in combination prompted the local community to reassess the value of our local environment. The desire to keep what is historically valuable is ever greater.

This is not abstract romanticism. It is striking that on the east side of The Crescent (in Bicentennial Park) the former industrial canal is proudly being rehabilitated in the humane imagery of arcadian nature while this western side is being crudely transformed into an

automobile-oriented 20th century urbanscape with pedestrian ducts and passages applied like wires and plumbing retrofitted onto an inflexible building.

The need for improved roads is not in dispute. The planning around them can and must be improved in detail.

Summary of suggestions for consideration

- Apply more sensitive design work the LR station area and pedestrian bridge re signage, lighting, sound barriers, bicycle and scooter parking, shade and especially tree planting.
- Visual concerns about the overpass have not yet been allayed. Moving the rising road lanes to the centre lane, further away from the mural, would allow more width to the pedestrian path. At the same time this rationalises the vehicle journey, as cars and trucks will naturally get into the right lane to turn right. The heritage mural, a work of sincere local pride, would be better respected. That this emotive point is listed so late in this submission is indicative of the urgency of the above points.
- Remove the down-ramp to the green bridge so that an 'at grade' (bay level) wheelchair-accessible pedestrian path can be put in its place.
- Relocating the poorly-sited bus stop to a spot opposite TAFE would provide yet more pedestrian space.
- Retain or reinstate the "Horseshoe Bridge" pedestrian and cycle path.

The general thrust of these suggestions may be summarised thus:

The damaged environmental balance needs to be much more vigorously addressed.

We in the Inner West and especially North Annandale need more, not less, connectivity to link our parks.

We need options that do not force pedestrians, dog walkers, cyclists, the aged and the very young to be stuck immobile on paths and traffic lights waiting for wider space.

In closing, we would be remiss not to add that the tight time frame for this submission exercise will have the likely result that fewer than all potential corresponding residents will contribute to an exchange that will affect their future health and property.

The remit Transport for NSW is connecting people. We urge you to attend to this with maximum effort.

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