

## **Redfern Resident Submission - Oslington**

I support the upgrading of Redfern Station, but not the current Transport NSW preferred option 1 which is poorly thought out and has significant safety, heritage and resident impact problems. An upgrade should provide lifts and better disabled access, along with catering for the increasing numbers of commuters, and restoring the former southern entrance connecting Redfern station with Sydney University, Carriageworks etc. This is an also opportunity to connect the two sides of Redfern for pedestrians and bikes – something which has been planned for a long time.

The Transport NSW proposal should be rejected pending further (preferably independent) consideration of the community generated proposals listed as options 5 and 6 in the documents. The existing options 2 3 and 4 were weak alternatives that were developed by Transport NSW alongside their preferred option 1, and the superior community generated options 5 and 6 were not considered in the Transport NSW controlled community consultation process. I note that Transport NSW has pre-emptively acquired the building involved in their option 1, and has a financial interest in selling off the land in Wilson St where the previous southern entrance to Redfern station was located, and where the community believes the new southern entrance should be located.

Transport NSW will no doubt argue against any delay or proper assessment of the community generated alternatives, but this is such a significant site that a delay of a couple of months to achieve a much better outcome would be in the public interest.

My concerns about Transport NSW proposed Option 1 are:

- Safety of mixing cars, bicycles, and a large number of pedestrians at peak hour in the very narrow Little Eveleigh Street. Transport NSW conducted the spurious traffic counts reported in the EIS in March 2020 during the COVID pandemic period when numbers of pedestrians and cyclists were vastly reduced. There will continue to be considerable local car/truck traffic as deliveries and trades and resident pickup/dropoff will (quite reasonably) continue in Little Eveleigh Street. Transport NSW also seem to imagine that stopping the current busy cycleway at one end of Little Eveleigh Street and restarting it at the other end of the street will deal with the cycle traffic issue. All these cars and trucks and bikes will conflict with the

pedestrian traffic created by placing the exit in Little Eveleigh Street. University of Sydney now has over 20,000 students and a similar number of staff, many of whom use Redfern station at peak hours. Traffic of all types will no doubt increase in the future with the North Eveleigh redevelopment.

- Proximity of the proposed Little Eveleigh St exit to Lawson St means that pedestrian traffic from that exit to the University of Sydney etc is quite likely to revert to the already overcrowded Lawson St. This would be avoided by placing the Southern exit in Wilson St as per the community generated options, 5 and 6, under which there is a clear and direct path from the exit to the University via the wider Ivy St and Abercrombie St footpaths.
- Heritage value of the building at 125-7 Lt Eveleigh St, which Transport NSW is proposing to convert into the main station entrance. Planning NSW should examine virtual reality simulations of the proposed station entrance to understand the heritage destruction involved in their option 1.
- Impact on the heritage value of Redfern Platform 1 and other heritage buildings under the Transport NSW option 1. The community generated options 5 and 6 which place the overbridge and exit further south, connecting with Wilson St, would have much less impact on the most sensitive heritage.
- Severe noise and privacy issues for residents of Little Eveleigh Street. Transport NSW option 1 places the new exit directly opposite and approximately 8m away from the front doors of terrace houses in Little Eveleigh Street. Noise created by users of the exit (especially at night), as well as lights and announcements from the station would make these heritage terraces in front of the entrance uninhabitable. If the community generated options 5 or 6 were adopted the exit would be in the large square at the junction of Little Eveleigh St and Wilson St, well away from any residences.
- Problems with removal of resident parking from Little Eveleigh Street parking to a temporary car park on Transport NSW land in Wilson Street. This would create major problems for a several disabled and elderly long-term residents. There is also a mention of future plans for this parking area by Transport NSW and I suspect this alternative resident parking will disappear as soon as Transport NSW have obtained planning approval and completed the station upgrade. This would be make life

impossible for disabled or elderly residents, who cannot walk long distances to alternative parking.

- Lack of barrier-free access to proposed bridge for pedestrians and bikes. This would be a lost opportunity to connect the two halves of Redfern for pedestrians and cyclists, which is crucial to reducing the current severe congestion in Lawson Street. There is currently no other way over the railway line for some distance north and south of the Lawson St bridge. Transport NSW suggestion that pedestrians and cyclists can use their Opal cards at the barriers of their Option 1 overbridge is unrealistic, and more likely large numbers of bikes and pedestrians will be funnelled across Lawson St.

The only explanation I can see for Transport NSW keenness to put the Southern exit in Little Eveleigh St is that they want to sell-off the vacant land they own in Wilson St where the entrance should go. Is this what they mean in the EIS report by “The design [option 1] can be future-proofed to integrate with potential developments in the future”

I also have concerns about the process. These are

- The completely dishonest ‘community consultation’ process in late 2019, where the strong local resident opposition to the Option 1 was ignored by Transport NSW, and not reflected in the community consultation document. The statistics in the EIS on feedback are extremely vague and ambiguous; for instance it is impossible to work out exactly how many responses they received to the survey quoted in the consultation report, what information about the proposal and alternatives was provided to respondents, nor who exactly these respondents were. The method of reporting also consists of selected quotations from stakeholders, and none of the comments selected reflect the views of residents. If the respondents were travelling to Sydney University or Carriageworks it is very strange that none seem to have pointed out the longer travel distance to their destination under Option 1, and there are other anomalous aspects to the reported responses.
- The failure to include the community generated options 5 and 6 in the consultation process, despite allusions to the contrary in the documents prepared by Transport NSW.

- The dismissal on spurious engineering grounds of the two superior proposals prepared by local community groups (options 5 and 6). Both Transport NSW and the minister for Transport Andrew Constance have refused to respond to release the engineering advice for external scrutiny, and we suspect it does not exist.
- The determination of Transport NSW to ram their preferred option through quickly with limited consultation during COVID restrictions.

All of this suggests that in Transport NSW pushing their Option 1 there are other agendas in play than the welfare of commuters and local residents. This is a flawed proposal that endangers Redfern station users (death or serious injury is inevitable if Option 1 is allowed to proceed), trashes railway heritage, and has a severe negative impact on local residents, especially in Little Eveleigh St. We have no faith in any commitment from Transport NSW to further consult over the design of any Little Eveleigh St entrance if Option 1 is approved, given the dishonesty of their consultation so far. The community generated options 5 and 6 avoid these problems, as well providing the long-envisaged pedestrians and cycleway connection between the two sides of Redfern.

Residents, future occupants of the planned technology precinct, and rail users would all appreciate Planning NSW having the courage to resist the pressure from Transport NSW to approve Option 1, and instead insist on proper consideration of Options 5 and 6.