

Re: Redfern Station Upgrade - New Southern Concourse **Application Number SSI-10041**

REDWatch wishes to object to this proposal in its current form.

REDWatch has campaigned for many years for lifts at Redfern station and for improved connectivity across the rail corridor. You can find historical proposals and studies for the upgrade of Redfern Station on the Redfern Station tab at www.redwatch.org.au

The current proposal does not adequately address the connectivity issues around Redfern Station and for this reason; REDWatch is of the view that the current proposal is not adequate.

REDWatch is of the view that Transport for NSW (TfNSW) did not adequately assess the community proposals and that it is used a consultation process that did not equitably include community alternatives to justify Option 1 as the preferred option. The consultation included only the four proposal put together by TfNSW and did not put the community options to people involved in providing feedback. This was a result of the community options being presented to TfNSW at the beginning of their consultation.

On 6th August 2019, REDWatch and Reconnect Redfern presented a community option for a southern concourse at Redfern Station to TfNSW. This was followed by a discussion of the issues between REDWatch, Reconnect Redfern, local residents from Little Eveleigh Street and The Watertower, Councillor Philip Thalys and TfNSW staff. You can see the [PDF of the presentation on the REDWatch website](#). These notes are to add some of the presentation details not taken up in the slides.

Following the presentation of the four options by TfNSW at the Redfern Community Centre, REDWatch met and decided that the best way forward might be to try to formulate a community option that addressed the concerns of REDWatch and the residents from both sides of the railway line who had come together under the banner of Reconnect Redfern. REDWatch Co-ord member Damien Minton undertook to lead the project and did much of the work but was overseas at the time of the presentation, so REDWatch spokesperson Geoff Turnbull was asked by Reconnect Redfern to do the presentation.

The material in the presentation reflected a number of meetings by both REDWatch and Reconnect Redfern and numerous conversations with local residents and key institutions.

Key Community Priorities

The groups decided on five key priorities:

- 1) Support the improvement of Redfern Station accessibility including to platforms 11 & 12 and to a bus rail interchange
- 2) Improve pedestrian rail commuter flow, reduced congestion and improved safety to all platforms including to platforms 11 & 12
- 3) Enhancing public pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to key local destinations was a key concern. This aspect was considered inadequate in the TfNSW proposals. The TfNSW Future Transport Strategy 2056 says, "The Strategy and Plans also focus on the role of transport in delivering movement and place outcomes that support the character of the place and the communities we want in the future." Movement and Place are considered a key aspect of future transport planning, and the NSW Government Architect is currently developing guidelines. Currently it is the community view that key Movement and Place considerations are not adequately dealt with in the TfNSW options. Key public pedestrian and bicycle connectivity needs to link:
 - Australian Technology Park (South Eveleigh)

- Redfern business district and transport hubs
 - Proposed North Eveleigh technology and innovation centre
 - Carriageworks
 - Sydney University
- 4) Protect and promote heritage and local culture
 - 5) Retain local residential amenity

Major issues to be addressed

The groups also decided five major issues needed to be addressed by any option:

- 1) Connectivity between North and South Eveleigh
- 2) Accessibility to platforms 1 to 10
- 3) Accessibility to platforms 11 and 12 and to a bus train interchange
- 4) Impact on Little Eveleigh Street. This includes:
 - Discharge of commuters directly on to a residential street within a few metres of front doors
 - Interaction with the major two-way bike way that will see increasing use
 - Little Eveleigh St is the main access point for East North Eveleigh and future construction
 - Without parking, delivery and trades people would be impacted
 - It is the access for Foundry residents to their off street parking
 - A raised walkway to the rear of residences on the southern side of the street would impact those residents
- 5) Impact on Marian Street. This includes:
 - No footpath on Marian Street for pedestrians
 - Pedestrian interaction with Watertower parking
 - Kiss and Drops activity and other traffic conflicting with pedestrian movements

The point was made that residents of Little Eveleigh and Marian Streets had a strong reaction to the visuals from the TfNSW options that showed only a few people in the proposed treatments rather than a peak hour representation required by transport studies. The point was made that traffic, pedestrian studies use peak time movement assessments, and that TfNSW needs to do similar analyses and model how the proposed treatments would work with the interactions between bidirectional flows and interactions with cars and bikes. Reference was made to the experience of residents trying to move towards the station of a morning in Lawson Street against a tide of students walking, skateboarding and bike riding to Sydney University.

Background and Context

The background and context focused on the broad “Movement and Place” issues:

- 1) Lawson Street is the only way across the railway line for pedestrians, bikes and vehicles
- 2) The twin arterial of Gibbons and Regent Streets is a barrier that separates Redfern Street from Redfern Station – In the early 2000s a number of studies on tunnels and overpasses were done by The Premier’s Department to try to address this major problem
- 3) The lack of a bus rail interchange sees commuters having to cross the twin arterial roads to catch most busses
- 4) The railway line itself is a barrier between Darlington and the University, and Alexandria and South Eveleigh.
- 5) The need for station accessibility and safe use of all platforms including platforms 11 & 12

The presentation then showed a number of illustrations from the Redfern Waterloo Authority (RWA) Built Environment Plan One, The North Eveleigh Concept Plan and from the exhibited “Eveleigh Heritage Walk” to show that a pedestrian and cycle connection between North and South Eveleigh had been a key component of RWA planning for the area. This connectivity is missing from the TfNSW options. It was pointed out that:

- 1) The pedestrian and cycle bridge was expected to be connected to the rail concourse in some form (see floor space ratio map)
- 2) There are strong heritage interpretation reasons to reconnect the former Eveleigh Railyards from North to South, as historically there was a bridge at this location.
- 3) The Australian Technology Park sale agreement to Mirvac included a covenant that a cross railway bridge could land at South Eveleigh. This was one of a number of covenants pushed by REDWatch and others at the time after a City of Sydney risk assessment of the ATP sale.
- 4) This connection will be very important in the future for students travelling from the Waterloo Metro station to Sydney University.
- 5) A bike connection would allow a Southward connection toward Alexandria to connect to the main Wilson Street bike path and take some pressure off Lawson Street and problems for bikes trying to get up Gibbons Street past the station and the pedestrian holding area.

None of the RWA options directly addresses how this cross line connection connects to the station. Station upgrade plans had stalled by 2008 when the RWA proposed its “Eveleigh Heritage Walk”.

The TfNSW Options and Issues

Each option was assessed against the “Major issues to be addressed” discussed earlier and this assessment was shown on the slide with ticks and crosses.

No option presented connects currently to platforms 11 & 12 or to a bus rail interchange as TfNSW is looking to sell the site above platforms 11 & 12 for an over station development and does not want to pre-empt a potential developer's options.

The TfNSW options are:

- 1) TfNSW Option 1: Little Eveleigh Street Connection – The key issues with this model are discharge into Little Eveleigh and Marian Streets which create the problems earlier mentioned.
- 2) TfNSW Option 2: Ground Level Pathway (Wilson St Connection) – This option avoids Little Eveleigh Street but it is not a direct route, goes down and up, and does not address problems at Marian Street.
- 3) TfNSW Option 3: Aerial Walkway (Wilson St Connection) - This option avoids Little Eveleigh Street, but to make it more direct, goes over the top of the heritage building and places a privacy barrier at the rear of South side Little Eveleigh St residences. It does not address problems at Marian Street.
- 4) TfNSW Option 4: South Eveleigh to Wilson St Connection – this is the only option that addresses Marian Street issues, but even TfNSW argues this is not viable as it does not provide a single concourse.

Community Option 5 Journey

The community options were presented as the Journey that people had gone on to develop the proposed option.

Journey – “H” Design – This was an early option from The Watertower. It was in line with the RWA proposal for a bridge between North and South Eveleigh that linked to a southern concourse. It puts the concourse where it needs to be for the platform constraints and the non-paid North South connection where it needs to be and links them. Transport has argued that this is three bridges and it is only building one bridge as part of an access upgrade. There is a lot of support for this option.

With TfNSW ruling out this option, the community then set about developing a hybrid bridge model that tries to make a single bridge fulfil both purposes. This is a difficult task as the concourse stairs

need to be as close as possible to the platform buildings while the North South connection ideally needs to be as direct as possible. Whatever option emerged from this compromise it had to sacrifice some of the desirable features of the “three bridge option”.

Journey - Hybrid Option 2 + 4 (modified) – This was an option after the four TfNSW options were released. Again it came from The Watertower and is a marrying of Options 2 and 4. The aim was to make a viable option 4 given that TfNSW had not succeeded. TfNSW also sees this as a two bridge option although it is doubtful it involves less construction than its own option 4.

Journey - (Cracknell & Lonergan Architects v1) – This option was produced by Cracknell & Lonergan Architects in response to a brief prepared by Damien Minton after discussions with REDWatch and Reconnect Redfern. It captures the essence of the 2 & 4 hybrid in a more ascetically pleasing form, but it did not address how to connect to Wilson Street.

Journey - (Cracknell & Lonergan Architects v2) – This option was a response to a Reconnect Redfern meeting asking why can't we go through the heritage building and adaptively reuse it. This was seen as an acceptable alternative to a flyover option that was higher than people's back fences. While Cracknell & Lonergan drew this as going through the building lengthways this was not necessarily the intention of the meeting.

It was felt by REDWatch and Reconnect Redfern that this proposal was close enough for a concept drawing for presentation as the community option 5. It shows how to combine both a pedestrian and bicycle cross-railway bridge with a paid concourse. It is not an ideal outcome, but it fits with TfNSW's stated aim of having only one bridge. It meets the concerns raised by REDWatch and Reconnect Redfern.

Rather than work with the community to try and arrive at a workable solution TfNSW has pressed ahead with its Option, REDWatch is hence of the view that TfNSW did not adequately assess the community proposals presented.

The proposal as exhibited does not deal with the pedestrian issues along Little Eveleigh Street or in Marian Street. The design of how these shared areas will work has been left for a later design consultation to try to address the pedestrian, bike, motor vehicle and noise issues that concern residents in both the access streets. As a result, the key impact on local residents has not been adequately addressed by the proposal and it should be required to do this assessment and re-exhibit.

The proposal also does not address the TfNSW Future Transport Strategy 2056 that “The Strategy and Plans also focus on the role of transport in delivering movement and place outcomes that support the character of the place and the communities we want in the future.” Connectivity across the railway line was a key aspect of the RWA and community considerations.

The current proposal is to gate the concourse and not allow free movement across the concourse. Many stations include both a ticketed and public concourse across the railway line. This proposal does not. REDWatch is of the view that this is a key need for our community. There is significant bike and pedestrian desire line between Darlington (Sydney University and Carriageworks) and South Eveleigh and buses. This desire line will increase with the opening of Waterloo Metro station when students on the Bankstown line are likely to need to move from Waterloo to get to Sydney University.

Little Eveleigh Street is a major bike path but there are many difficulties to move from the Lawson Street bridge past the station exit down Gibbons Street towards Alexandria. In REDWatch's view there will be a growing need for bikes to move along this desire line.

REDWatch is of the view that should the southern concourse be approved, it should only be on the condition it be barrier free so bikes and pedestrian can easily move from one side to the other.

It is proposed that to access the concourse it will be necessary to tap on and tap off. We have major concerns about a process that opens people who do not have an Opal card, or are not using the trains, to a sizable fine for not having tapped on and tapped off.

If TfNSW will not provide a non-ticketed concourse as part of this bridge then REDWatch is of the view that tap on and tap off should be as travellers leave the Southern Concourse to access a platform to travel and definitely not at either exit from the concourse.

TfNSW has argued that as a busy station there are revenue protection issues that need to be addressed. While we appreciate this concern, revenue protection should not be at the expense of the many young people and people with complex issues within our community who are likely to move

across the concourse as a short cut without using the stations train system. These people will bear the cost of TfNSW not delivering a paid and unpaid concourse.

REDWatch welcomes the provision of lifts at Redfern Station and TfNSW's undertakings that it is looking at how this concourse can be extended to also deliver lift access to platforms 11 & 12 and access to a much needed future bus train interchange.

In opposing the current proposal REDWatch wishes to note that we have, on a number of occasions, asked TfNSW for a movement strategy / permeability plan that would show the concourse in the context of the broader redevelopment precinct of North Eveleigh and above platforms 11 & 12, as both will add substantially to the numbers around the station.

In the absence of any undertaking for an open access crossing parallel with the Southern Concourse, we have to proceed on the basis that the Southern Concourse exhibited might be the only way across the railway line. If that is the case then the current concourse proposal needs to deliver on movement and place outcomes needed for Redfern Station and those who live around the station.

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REDWatch is a residents and friends group covering Redfern Eveleigh Darlington and Waterloo (the same area originally covered by the Redfern Waterloo Authority). REDWatch monitors government activities in the area and seeks to ensure community involvement in all decisions made about the area. More details can be found at www.redwatch.org.au.