

**Proforma A**

## **INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE CBD AND SOUTH EAST LIGHT RAIL PROJECT**

**Name:** Proforma A – submitted via Dogooder.com

**Number received:** 62 responses in part or full

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# PROFORMA A

## MY PERSONAL DETAILS ARE CONFIDENTIAL

Thank you for the opportunity to make a Submission to the Inquiry.

My concerns include:

- The impact on local businesses and communities as a result of the project and now unknown project completion date.
- Once the project is finalised the service will be at capacity within a short period of time, e.g events at Royal Randwick, and Sydney Football Stadium as well as the University of NSW. These factors were well known and raised during the public exhibition period(s) however not addressed.
- The lack of detailed design and premature awarding of the project on 17 December, 2014 to a private consortia, i.e. prior to the review and assessment of Modification No 1 by the Department of Planning; and prior to the close of the public exhibition period later on the same day. This followed the withdrawal of another tenderer after concerns about 'digging up George Street' (SMH, 21 July, 2014).
- The project's premature awarding has had consequences for the project timeline and with it, impacted local communities as well as the wider public. In addition are implications in terms of the light rail's future operations, as well as the substantive budget over-runs.
- Moreover, the project approval proceeded despite corruption investigations in the UK and US into Alstom, one of the organisations associated with the consortia (Daily Telegraph, 20 August 2015)
- Moreover, the project approval was awarded despite concerns about the successful tenderer, which were highlighted by the media.
- Furthermore, some government documents document the date as the 18 December, 2014, despite the Stock Exchange announcement confirming the date as 17 December, 2014.
- Significantly, Modification No 1, at an estimated cost of half a billion dollars changed key aspects of the project. This included the length of the 'tram' (to 67 metres) with its corresponding impact on the route design and capacity, and with it, the increased operational noise and risks in terms of traffic management and pedestrian safety. The changes also had implication for the stop platform designs and pedestrian movement, and saw the controversial felling of many additional fig trees along Anzac Parade to make way for a temporary detour road as well as changes along Anzac Parade and Alison Road. This resulted in the removal of mid-19th Century figs as well as the historic Hills Weeping Figs (green wall) along Alison Road which were planted in the 1930s to 1950s.
- It also has implication for the future management of the line, with the line expected to be at capacity shortly after opening
- The loss of many of Sydney's most significant trees has in turn had a diminution in terms of amenity and aesthetic value for present and future generations, particularly communities along

the route as well as the wider public. Further given the net loss in urban canopy cover, the project will have a corresponding impact on health, wellbeing, nature and amenity.

- Moreover, the remedial (offset) package does not properly account for, and compensate communities who live in the City of Sydney and Randwick Council local government areas. This is because the overall canopy loss is far greater than the program provides. This is a significant issue, given the areas' higher population density and the communities already disadvantaged in terms of having less urban canopy cover compared with other parts of Sydney. With significant increases in the future population for the local areas, the loss in urban tree canopy has implications for not only existing but also future communities.

- Further, Modification No 2 reduced obligations in relation to the project's communication requirement. This Modification as has been the case for another two Modifications was not widely notified. In turn this prevented local communities from knowing that the Modification was on exhibition, with the lack of objections consequently used to justify consent approval as part of the assessment process.

- In addition, the failure to properly manage the 'Urban Tree Management', i.e. consent conditions B47 and B48 has put some of the remaining figs at risk, despite Environmental Management Measure T4 being included. The measure which provides a commitment to use construction techniques that minimise the impact to tree root zones, has been repeatedly neglected in many cases, with some of the remaining significant figs now at risk.

- However, this has been repeated with some of the most significant trees at risk.

- In addition, the consultation process has been deeply flawed, with key issues not addressed. Instead major issues have been deflected as evidenced in the Submissions Report for Modification 1. This includes noise and dust concerns for educational facilities at the University of NSW and Sydney High Schools'; the removal of many of the historic figs along ANZAC Parade; the redesign of the route along Alison Road, as well as changes to Anzac Parade (temporary detour road) and at the Anzac Parade and Alison Road intersection (e.g., the loss of CMPT land and mid-19th century fig trees) and flood mitigation in Centennial Park.

- Moreover, while the fig trees at the corner of Darley & Alison Roads were to be protected, the scale of the pruning and poor environmental management has put these trees at risk. Furthermore, design and aesthetic concerns in relation to the stabling yards on Alison Road were similarly deflected, which has had an adverse heritage impact to Royal Randwick. Likewise, the retaining wall along Centennial Parklands, with unforeseen costs as a result.

- Likewise the retaining wall along Alison Road has spoilt the visual sightlines and seen the contractor claim an additional \$200 million in costs (The Australian 19 May, 2018).

- Moreover, the public exhibition period for Modification 1 was limited to only 14 days in the lead up to Christmas 2014. As a consequence only 118 submissions were made compared with c. 4,500 for the initial project approval despite the major redesigns to the project. Further, the Submissions Report that followed the next month despite the annual closedown for the Christmas-New Year break) appeared to rely on the process for consent approval for the initial project despite major changes being made to the project and the constraints. Yet despite a number of submissions raising these concerns, the Submissions Report largely deflected key concerns.

- In addition, I have concerns that the Terms of Reference for this Inquiry have been limited to the impact 'on residents and businesses in the vicinity of the light rail route' despite the project having wider implications, i.e. the impact on the public purse from the cost blow out and poor governance and process.

- To this end, I request that the Inquiry be expanded to enable the impact on the wider public to be identified and recommendations made to ensure potential and future infrastructure projects are properly assessed and managed.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours Sincerely,