

INQUIRY INTO CROSS CITY TUNNEL

Organisation: Darlinghurst Business Partnership
Name: Mr Stephan Gyory
Telephone:
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Theme:

Summary

INQUIRY INTO CROSS CITY TUNNEL SUBMISSION

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Name: Stephan Gyory
Position: Communications Director

Darlinghurst Business Partnership represents over 100 businesses in the areas surrounding Oxford Street Darlinghurst. Formed over two years ago to manage the Oxford Street upgrade, we are now active on many fronts.

We also work closely with local resident groups to ensure that the needs of businesses and residents are reconciled.

Although the DBP formed after the initial CCT consultation, many of our members have lived and worked in the area for 10, if not 20 years. None were consulted on the Cross City Tunnel.

We are particularly concerned about the impact that surface road changes have had in the area.

In terms of Trade, many businesses have been severely affected; some even forced to close, especially on Bourke Street.

In terms of safety, closed and/or restricted streets lack passive security and a corresponding increase in anti social and illegal behaviours is evident, particularly an increase in street prostitution in East Sydney.

Two key objectives of the Environmental Impact Statement were:

- 1) 'to improve the environmental quality of public spaces within Central Sydney'
- 2) 'to improve the ease of access and reliability of travel within Central Sydney'

Not only has the CCT failed to realise these aims, but any reasonable person will conclude that in many places, the opposite has in fact been achieved.

These results are unacceptable as it is obvious that the aims stated and the road changes instituted are in many cases mutually exclusive.

City of Sydney recently commissioned a survey of the area with the intent of formulating a marketing plan: **City Plans for Oxford Street - Office of Lord Mayor, 29 November 2005.** This survey found that 889,420 people live within a 10km radius of Oxford Street. Couple this with the number of people working and visiting the area and you start to see the problem clearly.

These people need to get into and out of the city, not under it and while the CCT facilitates East/West travel, the associated road changes have created real problems for people who dwell and transact within it. For those with a politically correct bent, 'real problems' translates into 'reduced amenity'

CCT surface changes have increased travel times, increased congestion, increased anti social behaviours, increased taxi fares (50-100%), reduced access, reduced passing trade, and made navigating the area a professional exercise.

Consultation in this matter was ad hoc and far from the level that should have been required of a project with this capacity to affect the livelihoods and well being of so many residents and businesses.

City of Sydney has only complicated matters by closing Bourke Street and congesting Queens Cross. These changes were not required under the CCT agreement, as evident in the 'Traffic Changes' documents procured from the RTA.

In light of the mix of business and residents in this area we reject the notion of rat running altogether. This huge density demands free and easy access, anything less is to choke Sydney.

It is necessary to point out that if the City wishes to create streets with 'suburban amenity' for every City resident who complains passing traffic, then this will require the closing of all non arterial roads. In a city of four million, this is not an option.

We take this opportunity to call for a complete and integrated transport study in Sydney, one which takes into account economic as well as residential needs. This study must recognise a number of facts:

- 1) That people need to be able to get into and around a city for that city to thrive.
- 2) That closing roads is a failure to manage traffic, transport and safety issues.
- 3) That roads will remain necessary for what ever mode people use to commute.

We accept the CCT as a positive reality, but completely object to the sacrifice of public roads and as such, strongly urge the removal of all obstacles to easy access into and out of Sydney.

While funnelling may be part of the contract the State Government signed with the CCT consortium, it is not, and never will be, part of the social contract the government has with us.

Stephan Gyory
Darlinghurst Business Partnership