

**Submission
No 24**

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

Organisation: Ryde Gladesville Climate Change Action Group

Date Received: 8 July 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to make a Submission to the Inquiry. The Ryde Gladesville Climate Change Action Group is a group of over 600 residents concerned about climate change and the need to act swiftly to reduce our carbon emissions. Trees are a critical carbon storage system and are vital in reducing carbon emissions. We are, therefore, greatly concerned about the cutting down of the trees along Anzac Parade for the light rail which has resulted in the destruction of important tree canopy, habitat for birds and other animals and green space for the local community. We are also concerned about the impact on local business and communities as a result of the project. Our specific concerns follow:

1. The premature awarding to a private consortia prior to proper reviews, assessment and public comment has, we believe, resulted in the budget and project timeline blowouts. In turn this has impacted local communities as well as the wider public. Further, 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).

2. The loss of many of Sydney's most significant trees will see 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 and amenity.

3. The overall tree canopy loss is far greater than the program provides. This is a significant issue, given the areas' higher population density and that communities are already disadvantaged in terms of having less urban canopy cover when compared with other parts of Sydney. Given the significant increase in the future population for the local area, the loss in urban tree canopy has implications for both the existing and future communities.

4. 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. This measure was intended to ensure the contractor's commitment to use construction techniques that minimise the impact to tree root zones. However this has been repeated, with some of the most significant trees now at risk.

5. The Terms of Reference for this Inquiry appear limited to the impact 'on residents and businesses in the vicinity of the light rail route' despite the project having far wider implications, i.e. the impact on the public purse from the cost blow out and poor governance and process. To this end, we 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 our Submission. Yours sincerely,