

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

Parliamentary Enquiry - Impact of the CBD and South East Light Rail Project

I am making this submission on the basis of 2 areas of concern. These include:

- 1) Disregard for resident and business concerns relating to safety issues of the CSELR alignment, and failure to address these concerns by NSW Department of Planning and TfNSW, prior to the commencement of the project; and
- 2) Disregard for resident and business concerns relating to the CSELR project operations (specifically operation of the Olivia Gardens site), and failure to address these concerns by TfNSW, ALTRAC and Acciona after the commencement of the project.

Point 1 - Lack of Government Response to the CSELR Alignment Safety Issues.

The TfNSW "CBD AND SOUTH EAST LIGHT RAIL PROJECT SUBMISSIONS REPORT - Incorporating Preferred Infrastructure Report" represented a totally inadequate attempt by Planning and Transport to address the CSELR safety concerns of individuals and organisations that took the time and effort to document these very serious issues with this poorly-planned and designed infrastructure project. Of particular concern to me as a resident of Surry Hills, is the safety of the proposed alignment along Devonshire Street, and the NSW Government's lack of acknowledgement of inherent dangers in this alignment.

a) **Devonshire Street is very narrow and of mixed usage** (residential, commercial, religious, educational etc.) which makes it a dangerous alignment for operation of the very large and very heavy LRVs used to provide the CSELR service.

b) **LRVs are heavy and dangerous vehicles when operated at grade.** As the proposed average speed of the CSELR operation along Devonshire Street is to be 40km per hour (in the EIS it was noted as 45km per hour) and as LRVs are considerably larger and heavier than a standard car, then I would wonder how an LRV would be able to stop in an emergency to avoid a motor vehicle, bike rider, elderly resident, person with headphones on, or suffering the effects of alcohol, or small child that might stray into its path. I also note that there is a "School Zone" right in the middle of the proposed alignment (Crn Devonshire and Bourke Streets) and so there are lots of small children in this area for a few hours before and after school.

c) **LRVs are heavy and difficult to stop.** If an LRV could stop to avoid a collision then I would assume that people riding the service would be severely injured by such a sudden stop. I have attached a **Monash University Report** that outlines the safe operational speeds for an LRV.

d) **Even the NSW Government admits that competing demands of LRVs, public transport, private vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians present a major design issue with the alignment.** I note that as a result of submissions to the CSELR EIS Process in 2013, that TfNSW made a major design change to the Chalmers Street CSELR alignment on the following design principles (see "CBD AND SOUTH EAST LIGHT RAIL PROJECT SUBMISSIONS REPORT Incorporating Preferred Infrastructure Report" Chapter 6 - page 6-17 for details):

- **Safety** — including the **provision of a safe and secure environment for all users** and which provides appropriate access for emergency vehicles.
- **Efficiency and priority** — including the creation of legible, fast and efficient transfer for all customers of the transport system that is simple for customers to navigate.
- **Property access and special events** — including provision to maintain property access and adequate contingency and flexibility to accommodate major incidents and special events.
- **Managing Competing Demands** — including where practicable, **segregating conflicting or incompatible transport modes**, or their interaction prioritised and managed.

The changes to the Chalmers Street alignment was a major re-design of this part of the route and as highlighted in the TfNSW Report was in direct response to and justified by "**the competing transport demands within Chalmers Street including the use of this area for LRVs, public transport, private vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians**" (page 6-16).

e) **TFNSW continues to ignore the obvious safety issues inherent in the Devonshire Street alignment.** The alignment of CSELR down Devonshire Street represents a known and unacceptable level of risk and danger to everyone who lives within or accesses the area. I have attached excerpts from a NSW Government commissioned **ARUP Report** that highlights the dangers of the whole CSELR alignment and the estimated injuries and fatalities that will occur as a result of its operation.

The project is flawed in many ways and represents significant and known dangers to residents, businesses and people who live and work in the vicinity of the alignment.

Point 2 - Project Construction Dust and Noise.

a) **Ongoing and high impact noise and dust problems on the Olivia Gardens site and ALTRAC's unresponsiveness.** The residents of Parkham and Nobbs Streets (Surry Hills) and businesses in the area that border the site, have had to endure ongoing noise and dust problems since March 2015 when Olivia Gardens was demolished. The site has been used for materials reprocessing and stockpiling/storing (dug up from along the route) since late 2016 (please see **attached photo of the site**). I have regularly complained to Acciona about dust and noise levels (copies of correspondence can be supplied) but little action was taken.

b) **Short and long term health impacts of operations conducted on the Olivia Gardens site.** I have had ongoing respiratory health problems since demolition work commenced on the site i.e. March 2015, and there seems to be no end in sight to the project, as the NSW Government will not provide a firm end date and are currently in litigation with two of their main project contractors. Many of my neighbours are also suffering depression and health issues as a result of the disruption and destruction of neighbourhood amenity caused by Acciona. The excavations on this site have also caused a rat plague (please see **attached photo**). Sydney City Council have been contacted about this issue on a number of occasions but are either unable or unwilling to work with ALTRAC to do something about this very serious public health problem.

I have also attached an **Occupational Respiratory Diseases Report (Federal Government)** as well as an **Asphalt Exposure Report (US CDC)**. While residents don't work at the site they have lived next to it 24/7 and I am especially concerned about long term silicon exposure to residents that the site operations represent (dust from processing smashed concrete) and also the chemicals we are being exposed to that are contained in the dust from smashed road base. The reports don't make for pleasant reading.

c) **Lack of dust mitigation on the Olivia Gardens site.** The Acciona project management, who operate the site, have done nothing to effectively mitigate this dust exposure for the residents or their workers. They did not start to monitor dust levels until a few months into 2018 (**as indicated in an email response**) in spite of many complaints about dust levels, and so would have been unable to ascertain whether dust was at acceptable levels. This is negligent in the extreme. Reprocessing concrete and asphalt should not have occurred (unmonitored) in the middle of a residential area.

I have also attached the **Dust and Air Quality Management Plan** from the project (downloaded from the Sydney Light Rail project site with relevant highlighted sections). ALTRAC/Acciona have been clearly in breach of their recommended dust mitigation practices.



