

Submission  
No 154

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

**Organisation:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 8 July 2018

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Partially  
Confidential

## MY PERSONAL DETAILS ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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

In particular, I am concerned about the impact on local business and communities as a result of the project.

My specific concerns are:

- the extraordinary length of time that construction has taken place along the Light Rail route. The inconvenience is not short-term but long-term bordering on chronic particularly as we now have a legal dispute underway between the NSW Govt and Acciona. The pedestrian pavements are an eyesore and speak to pedestrians that they are not welcome to use the pedestrian amenity. There are barricades everywhere. This has been going on since 2016 and we are told that the work will not be complete until March 2020. It is absolutely unreasonable to expect an entire community – and I speak of Kensington specifically as that is where I live – to experience construction for over 4 years! I have two children that I walk to school with. They are very young and the majority of their school lives, they have only experienced Kensington in a state of construction.
- the mass destruction of the city's natural environment. The loss of mature, historic trees on Anzac Pde, Alison Road and Wansey Road and the continuing loss of trees. The Environmental Impact Statement prepared by Elton Consultants made little reference to the historical significance of those trees and their memorial significance for WWI soldiers. Elton Consultants failed to properly measure and quantify the environmental loss and impact of numerous trees. Please listen to this podcast which explains how other cities quantify the value of city trees. Why did Elton Consultants not consider this important aspect given the purpose of their consultation was to assess 'environmental impact'?  
[http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2017/08/mey\\_20170831.mp3](http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2017/08/mey_20170831.mp3)
- I have spoken to so many business owners in Kensington all who are exasperated and frustrated with carrying out their business functions in a construction zone that is set to stay for many, many more months. It is disheartening to see a once vibrant and cohesive business community be displaced by the NSW Government. I have heard of business owners struggling to make ends meet because customers seek to avoid Kensington whilst it remains under perpetual construction. I have heard of business owners unable to sell their businesses because the market would not be interested in a business in Kensington under the current circumstances. Today, I heard a story of a gym owner who's premises were flooded because excavations on the light rail site nearby caused a pipe to burst and the contractors attending the property initiated discussions with a denial until the gym owner confronted the with CCTV footage of how the damage was caused. As a long-time resident of this area, it saddens

me to see the spirit of Kensington depleted and the morale of residents and local business owners be driven to such a low point.

- I have friends whose properties back onto the Light Rail stabling yard on Doncaster Ave and their properties have sustained cracks in the walls and flooding yet the NSW Govt has offered no assistance or compensation to these people. Instead, I understand

the NSW Govt and or its contractors consistently deny any responsibility for any damage caused on account of light rail works.

- One lane in each direction on Anzac Parade in Kensington has been removed to make way for the light rail tracks. This has added traffic and congestion on Anzac Parade. It is particularly congested on the Dacey Ave / Alison Road / Anzac Pde at peak hour in the mornings where traffic is bottle-necked for at least 10-15 minutes. This never used to be the case pre-light rail construction. This has increased my journey time to work in the mornings and of-course added inconvenience which I did not experience pre-light rail construction.
- Three of my usual bus-stops in Kensington have been forever shut-down making my door to door commute to work longer than my commute pre-light rail construction. It is inconceivable how the elderly walk to the lengthy distances to the newly, more spread out bus stops or indeed will be able to walk to the more sparsely spaced tram stops once the light rail begins to operate. I very much doubt the Light Rail will be able to offer a faster and more convenient service when taking into account walking distances to and from bus stops and tram stops. The elderly and disabled commuting to the Royal Prince of Wales Hospitals have suffered significant inconvenience due to greater distances between bus stops and the hospital.
- I refer to the EMM report entitled 'Anzac Parade corridor future Light Rail station and system capacity analysis' prepared for Randwick Council in January 2017. Specifically, that report states, "It is a significant concern that the proposed Light Rail system capacity will actually be lower than the capacity of the existing peak hour bus services which are currently using Anzac Parade and Todman Avenue and the future corridor public transport system will effectively be operating at full capacity from the commencement of operations in 2019. This will require a significant number of existing peak hourly bus services (mainly the existing express bus service) to be retained if the system is to provide adequate public transport capacity for all the relevant areas of Randwick LGA in the future"

On account of the EMM expert's report, I am more than a little concerned that after an incredibly long construction process with much disruption and inconvenience, at the end of it all, residents in Kensington will not be able to use the new public transport system because we won't be able to get on it particularly during peak hour times. It is envisaged that passengers will have boarded the Light Rail in Kingsford and Randwick. A significant number of those passengers will have made their way to Kingsford and Randwick from places like Coogee, Maroubra, Malabar, Matraville and La Perouse to name a few, and they will alight the Light Rail in Kingsford or Randwick. Many of those passengers will be making their way to the CBD and by the time the Light Rail reaches Kensington during peak hour, I am concerned the Light Rail will be at full capacity. Which begs the question, what value does the implementation of the Light Rail add to Kensington? This is an important consideration given

the NSW Govt's expenditure on the project so far.

- When the Light Rail is used by UNSW students travelling to northbound to either Central or the CBD during peak hour in the evenings, will it have capacity at all for anyone else travelling from Kensington to Central / CBD?

Some of the concerns I have are very specific and require scrutiny and detailed investigation. They are as follows;

- the CBD Light Rail will be sharing the road with other traffic for most of the route. It's 67 metre carriages will cross over 70 intersections. It does not have signal priority and journey times are Cabinet-in-Confidence – therefore, Kensington residents remain completely in the dark as to how long their journey times on the light rail will be. Whilst this Parliamentary Inquiry is investigating the actual loss of amenity, it is envisaged there will be an even greater loss – the future loss of amenity experienced by people of South East Sydney. I urge the Parliamentary Inquiry to broaden its investigations to include both actual and future loss of amenity. I am appalled that the NSW Govt continues to promote this infrastructure as an improvement to public transport yet conceals, misrepresents and altogether fails to provide detailed information that highlights HOW it will be an improvement for commuters in Kensington.

As parking has been removed from Anzac Parade in Kensington since the Light Rail construction began, parking in residential streets has become more increased and caused congestion on residential streets. As people try to avoid Anzac Pde and the construction, vehicles are creating rat runs in Kensington's residential streets.

Pre-light rail construction, vehicles travelled through High Street and Barker Street. These streets were the main thoroughfares between Randwick and Kensington. The light rail tracks have now taken over High Street removing/limiting access to High Street and causing much traffic and congestion on Barker Street – a residential road on a steep incline that is highly pedestrianised by university students. One wonders how ambulance vehicles make their way through a congested Barker Street in an emergency during peak hour when Barker St is the ambulance service' point of entry and exit.

UNSW students have experienced long bus queues and significant delays waiting for bus services which the NSW Govt reduced following commencement of light rail construction. Why were bus services reduced following commencement of light-rail construction when they were adequately servicing UNSW students prior to light-rail construction?

Thank you for considering my Submission.

Yours sincerely,

This email was sent via Do Gooder, a website that allows people to contact you regarding issues they consider important.