

**Submission  
No 229**

## **INQUIRY INTO ROAD TOLLING REGIMES**

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As a resident of Redfern (facing onto South Dowling Street) I believe that more can be done to understand both speeding and congestion along this major strip of road.

I have many times felt unsafe as a pedestrian along Sth Dowling, the strip from Danks street to Maddison street (Nth Bound). When there is minimal traffic cars fly down the portion of road at far over the 60km / hr limit (possibly due to cars on the inner section of the distributor being 80km)

There is a nearby children's / dog park with no barrier between the footpath and the road. Likewise, cars turning left onto Crescent from Sth Dowling (Nth bound) come around the corner at speed, often not seeing pedestrians on the crossing until too late, forcing them to leap out of the way. Crescent Street is also then by nature, a speeding strip for those rat running.

By contrast, this section of Sth Dowling in both directions is highly congested quite a few times during the day.

It's clear that this section of Sth Dowling was never designed to carry the load of increased traffic brought by over development in Zetland and Green Square, which continues to put increasing pressure on this road and surrounding streets.

As a long time resident in this area I would often take the Cleveland St. on-ramp to the Eastern Distributor but over the years with the ever increasing rise tolls, this small motorway section is no longer affordable.

Using this short section of the M1 motorway saves both time and removes cars from the surface road (Sth Dowling) which otherwise pass all the way down Sth Dowling St North to zig zag through Darlinghurst then onwards thru William & Palmer Street to enter the Tunnel & Bridge entrances behind the art gallery. (A non tolled route from Surry Hills to the Harbour Crossings)

To highlight the absurdity, the 2.7km (2 minute) journey from this Cleveland St entrance point to the toll point (near the art gallery) is now \$8.37!

The surface road option pushes local area traffic through South Dowling north or worse, down Crown St and can take anywhere from 6 minutes to 15 minutes depending on the time of day. However this is a far more palatable option than paying \$4.19 per minute to use the motorway. (that's equivalent to a takeaway coffee EVERY MINUTE!)

Local residents are being forced to pay the exorbitant toll fee rather than use the roads in their local area which are increasingly being throttled to deal with traffic issues.

If there was a cash back scheme similar to the M5 where this short trip toll was reimbursed for those in the local area or the toll point moved before the Cleveland St (Nobbs St) distributor on-ramp there would be a great number of local residents of neighbouring Surry Hills, Redfern & Waterloo who would opt to get off the congested surface streets and use the Eastern Distributor as it was intended.

The injustice of having a major motorway literally under your nose which tolls you the same \$8.37 for a local on-ramp 2-MINUTE journey as those who enter 11KM upstream is both insulting and senseless.

I am a regular commuter on toll roads out to Sydney's North West so am no stranger to tolls but am consistently baffled how a 19km section of the M2 can cost less (\$8.28) than the 2.7km segment of

the Eastern Distributor which, if subsidised or removed would bring long sought after traffic relief to the area I call home.

South Dowling street has so many grand terrace houses facing the beautiful green fields of Moore Park, yet the continued growth in thoroughfare traffic on South Dowling have made this strip a parking lot or speedway depending on time of day.

I would love to see South Dowling Street north flourish with more cafes and restaurants, making use of it's rich canopy of trees to filter sunlight down to the terraces. However living life in a liveable city also means as a locals should not have to endure bottleneck restrictions or overpriced tolling to simply navigate out of their local area.