INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE ROZELLE INTERCHANGE

Name:Mr Tim GilesDate Received:16 March 2024

Tim Giles

Submission to Rozelle Interchange Inquiry

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the inquiry. My submission primarily relates to the Terms of Reference point (g) the impact on foot traffic and active transport options, though also touches on some related points.

The crux of my submission is that Transport for NSW places a low priority on Active Transport. This is despite having an Active Transport team, and a Road User Space Allocation Policy that requires that active transport be considered before private transport.

Effective Active Transport infrastructure actually reduces traffic congestion by encouraging modal change, using the same "induced demand" principal that causes increased traffic congestion after the opening of a motorway. Given this science is well known, it can only be assumed that the reason Transport for NSW focusses on delivering infrastructure for private vehicles is because there is a cultural disposition against supporting Active Transport.

Active Transport users along Victoria Rd and Anzac Bridge suffered through over 4 years of construction disruption, dust, and diversions; and in the end received very little for it. Given the construction resources that were available, the incremental cost of improving Active Transport along this corridor would have been tiny compared to the overall project budget, however a lack of will ensured that some commitments were not delivered.

Issue 1. Victoria Rd Separated Cycleway Remains Unbuilt

The separated cycleway from Iron Cove Bridge to Anzac Bridge has not been built, despite commitments in the EIS (appendix N, 4.1.2, excerpts below). The public consultation process led everyone to believe that putting four new lanes underground would free up space for active and public transport on the surface, such as achieved on Epping Rd after the Lane Cove tunnel opening. It should also be noted that the Victoria Rd route has been nominated by the NSW Government as a Strategic Cycleway Corridor.

4.1.2 IRON COVE ATN LINK

he active transport link at Iron Cove is shown in Figure 4.5 nd is a key connector that would:

- Connect northern suburbs of Drummoyne [and hassel Lea and Five Dock via the Bay Rue] to The Bays Precinct and the CBD
- ot the adiating retail communications and as well as local sof nunity services ride a direct route, notwithstand fient changes, from Iron Cove B

- cant open space from the Bay R do Rail Yard ture open space ilong The Bays Pr
- ovide a separated cycleway and footpath on the uthem side of Victoria Read along the extent of
- southern side of Viotoria Road along the extent of M4-M5 Link works Provide a template for the treatment of cycleway and footpaths along the remainder of Victoria Ro





ACTIVE TRANSPORT STRATEGY

POSED INITIATIVES AND FUTURE LINKS

7.0 Summary

The M4-M5 Link would deliver a significant addition to the within the project condox. The following table surmar the delivery clacitive transport routes as contained within report. The outles are illustrated in Figure 7.1. Those would be delivered by the project are shown in bold to

	Route	Rationale	Туре	Approx. Length	Delivery
A	Rozelle Rail Yards link				
	Links the Bay Run, The Bays Precinct and the Greenway in	1. Links Anzac Bridge through The Bays Precinct to Lilyfield Road at the western end of the Rozene Rail Yards	Separated cycle path	250m	M4-M5 Link and UrbanGrowt
	the west to Anzac Bridge and the CBD in the east	 Provides the junction connecting Rozelle Rail Yards and Victoria Road to The Bays Precinct 	Underpass	150m	M4-M5 Link
		 Provides the link between Victoria Road and the CSELR Rozete Maintenance Depot 4. Connecting the CSELR Rozete Maintenance Depot to Charles Street and Canal Road linking onto the Bay Run 	Separated cycle path Separated cycle path	1600m 1800m	M4-M5 Link Inner West Council/Roads and Martime/Transport for NSW
8	Johnstons Street link				
	Links the inner western suburbs to the Glebe Foreshores and the Rozelle Rail Yards	1. Connecting Parametta Road to The Croscent	Separated Cycle Way	1600m	Inner West Council and Road and Maritime
C	Victoria Road - Iron Cove link				
	Links the northern suburbs of Drummovne and Russell Lea	 Connecting the eastern side of the Rozelle Rail Yards along Victoria Road to the intersection of Robert Street 	Separated Cycle Way	250m	M4-M5 Link
	and Chiswick to The Bays Precinct and the CBD	 Connecting the intersection of Robert Street up and over Victoria Read to the intersection of Soriratide Street 	Separated Cycle Way	900m	Inner West Council
	A CONTRACTOR OF A CONTRACTOR OF A	3. Linking the intersection of Springside Street to the Iron Ceve Bridge and the Bay Run	Separated Cycle Way	450m	M4-M5 Link
		 Connecting Victoria Road to The Crescent Victoria Revision Automatica 5. Connecting Victoria Road to The Crescent Connecting The Crescent to James Craig Road existing ATN 	Shared Path Shared Path	400m	M4-M5 Link M4-M5 Link

However, it appears that an EIS commitment is not worth the paper it is written on. When the UDLP was subsequently released, it seems that a unilateral decision had be made that "a separated cycleway would not fit within the road boundary". This is despite NSW Transport's own Road User Space Allocation Policy (CP21000) which requires that space for active transport be considered before space for private transport. To rub salt into the wound, the UDLP also claimed that a shared path instead would meet the EIS requirement of a separated cycleway, when clearly, they are two different transport layouts.

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When reading that a shared path is to be installed, you would expect that it would be compliant with relevant standards. Transport for NSW's own Cycleway Design Toolbox specifications state in section 3.4 that a minimum shared path width of 4m is required. Whilst a compliant shared path was constructed in some locations near Iron Cove Bridge, between Robert St and the Anzac bridge approach no improvements were made at all. The narrow unimproved path does not meet Transport's guidelines, has unprotected proximity to bus traffic, and contains dangerous pinch points as well as poles in the centre of the lane which are a safety hazard. At times it is just 2.0m in width - supposedly catering for a high volume of cyclists and pedestrians travelling in in both directions. This is completely inadequate infrastructure, is against Transport's own policies, and yet continues to exist despite the completion of a multibilliondollar road project.

Further, the EIS stated that one of its "key route requirements" was to "Provide a template for the treatment of cycleways and footpaths along the remainder of Victoria Rd". I have not seen any design for these, let alone implementation of the section between Robert St and Springside St. If the inaction seen on the WestConnex delivered sections is to set a precedent for the rest of Victoria Rd, then this is a sad indictment on the car-centric culture of Transport for NSW.

Finally - don't now push the problem onto Inner West Council. The Springside St to Robert St section is listed as "to be completed by others", even though Victoria Rd is a state road. This is abdicating your responsibilities under Transport for NSW's own Road User Space Allocation Policy.

Questions to be answered by the inquiry:

- 1. Who approved the removal of the separated cycleway from the scope of the Iron Cove Link, and was this action properly authorised?
- 2. Which stakeholders were consulted about the cycleway removal and what rights of appeal were provided?
- 3. What design process was undertaken to analyse alternative options for fitting the Victoria Rd separated cycleway in? And what were those options? (such as reducing car lanes or a providing a cantilevered path into the White Bay site)
- 4. What failures in process resulted in no upgrades at all being made to the Robert St section of shared path?
- 5. Why weren't AustRoads Cycling Aspects guidelines followed in the design of the Victoria Rd shared path?
- 6. Where is the design template for the Victoria Rd cycleway?
- 7. When will Transport provide funding to Inner West Council for completion of the Victoria Rd cycleway from Springside St to Robert Rd?
- 8. Will Transport make good on the commitments in the EIS, and ensure all the Active Transport infrastructure in EIS Appx N Table 7.1 is delivered?

Issue 2. Transport for NSW Delivers Substandard Cycling Infrastructure

Substandard Active Transport infrastructure exists across NSW, which is a product of years of neglect. However, steps have been made to improve this situation, including setting up an Active Transport team inside Transport for NSW, the creation of a Road User Space Allocation Policy, and creating the Get NSW Active fund.

However, what gets delivered does not always meet AustRoad guidelines. I have identified and raised a number of path safety issues associated with the Rozelle Interchange works, as have others, including BicycleNSW. I have used my personal time to raise these issues with Transport because I know that if these aren't addressed now as part of the project, they are unlikely to ever be. A copy of this list is in the appendix below.

It is clear to me that Transport places a low priority on safety for Active Transport users. An example of this is the multitude of unmarked signage poles that have recently been placed in the centre of Shared Path lanes, creating collision risks. I have never seen a signage pole in the middle of a traffic lane, so why is it deemed acceptable to have one in a shared path? The poles could have been installed at the edge of the path, or not installed at all by sharing signage on nearby existing poles. I suspect this situation occurs simply because Transport does not look at usage of infrastructure from an Active Transport user's viewpoint. Again, this highlights cultural issues within Transport that need addressing.

Seven weeks later, I am still waiting for a response to the safety issues I have raised. Any follow up I try to make by telephone is answered by a third-party contact centre who can only take a message (which is not returned), and follow up attempts by email are met with a "please keep waiting" response. No one has or can provide a reference number or contact details of who is looking after my request. This complete lack of accountability is extremely frustrating for a citizen tax payer.

Questions to be answered by the inquiry:

- 9. What failings at Transport lead to new infrastructure that does not meet AustRoads Cyclist Aspects guidelines?
- 10. What training is given to the people who design and install infrastructure related to, or impacting on, Active Transport?
- 11. What steps can Transport make to increase accountability for responding to complaints, and what customer service level commitments need to be implemented?
- 12. Was a pre-opening Active Transport safety audit conducted? If not, what processes need to be updated in Transport to ensure this is the case in future?
- 13. And if an audit was conducted, what approval processes were followed to allow the discovered risks to be ignored?
- 14. Will Transport for NSW commit to rectifying the issues I have identified?

Issue 3. Active Transport is a Low Priority for Transport for NSW

Some examples of where Active Transport users just aren't top of mind are listed below.

- When the Anzac bridge approach shared path was closed for 6 months in 2020, the original WestConnex communication said no detours would be provided, and told cyclists to find their own way to the city. I've never observed motorists in the same position being deliberately neglected in this manner. Community outrage did result in Active Transport maps and signage subsequently being provided, but this episode showed the contempt that Active Transport users could expect over the construction period.
- Cyclists were promised that an off ramp near the Anzac Bridge western approach would be retained. This ramp was important to be able to bypass the narrow shared path after Robert St by remaining on Victoria Rd. However, this was removed during construction and not reinstated. No notification, no apology, and no offer to reinstate it when raised as an issue. The needs of cyclists were ignored.
- Unless it's a maintenance issue like removing debris or filling a pothole, it is very difficult to get safety issues and suggestions addressed by Transport.
- The proof points that Active Transport is a very low priority for Transport continue in other projects, with Bicycle NSW needing to suspend consultation over the Warringah Freeway Upgrade due to lack of meaningful engagement from the department. The painting shed left forgotten, unused and blocking the harbour bridge cycleway for 6 months in 2022 is another example. This caused at least one head on collision that resulted in NSW Ambulance attendance.

Sweeping cultural change is needed inside Transport for NSW to elevate Active Transport outcomes.

Questions to be answered by the inquiry:

- 15. How is the Transport for NSW Road User Space Allocation Policy used in practice?
- 16. Is the funding provided to Active Transport project sufficient to meet Government objectives?
- 17. What will change inside Transport to ensure that Active Transport infrastructure is appropriately incorporated in other current projects like the Warringah Freeway Upgrade?

Recommendations

Looking forward, here are five recommendations to both improve Active Transport and reduce traffic congestion.

Recommendation 1. Build the promised separated cycleway between the Iron Cove and Anzac bridges

More people on bikes means less people adding to traffic congestion, but safe active transport infrastructure must be built to enable this. Building the separated cycleway, as was intended in the EIS, will encourage the large number of riders who believe the current infrastructure is too dangerous to use. This will in turn reduce traffic demand. Before you build the cycleway, ensure that the design meets AustRoad requirements, and is approved by your key stakeholder, BicycleNSW.

Recommendation 2. Fix the safety issues that have been raised

A list of issues has been already been provided to Transport for NSW, see appendix below for a copy of these. Additionally, I am aware that BicycleNSW has raised other concerns to be addressed, and more may come to light from transparently publishing the Pre-Opening Safety Audit (assuming it was conducted). Fixing these issues will create a safer, more comfortable and inviting environment for users of Active Transport, and in turn induce people out of their cars.

Recommendation 3. Move the shared path off Anzac Bridge and onto Old Pyrmont Bridge

Reopen the Old Pyrmont Bridge for active transport users. This would create a low stress, low gradient, car free access to the city for a new generation of cyclists, as well as complete a pleasant loop walk around Blackwattle Bay for local residents to enjoy. Additionally, this will create a direct route between Pyrmont and the proposed White Bay redevelopment. The Darling Harbour swing bridge that was converted into a car free Active Transport access to the city is a good precedent to inspect.

Most importantly for Transport for NSW, once the Old Pyrmont Bridge is reinstated, the shared path on the main deck of the Anzac bridge could be reclaimed as an additional traffic lane. That's right, 25% extra citybound capacity on the Anzac bridge for general traffic, creating 10 lanes into 5 instead of 10 lanes into the current 4. This work could easily be tied into the proposed Western Distributor Road Network Improvements project.

Recommendation 4. Create Cultural Change

The Road User Space Allocation Policy requires Transport to put Active Transport ahead of private transport. Enact a cultural change program that elevates Active Transport within Transport, to remove the obstacles that are holding Sydney back from being a world class city with modern transport options.

- Execute appropriate leadership and organisational structure changes
- Remove senior leaders that don't support Active Transport policies
- Train staff at all levels in their Active Transport responsibilities
- Ensure adherence to the Road User Space Allocation Policy in all projects
- Audit and monitor effectiveness of Active Transport initiatives
- Increase funding directed to Active Transport projects

Recommendation 5. Enforce a carbon reduction target on Transport for NSW

Other government departments are doing their part to help the NSW Government meet their target of a 50 per cent emissions reduction on 2005 levels by 2030 and to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Transport should be responsible for measuring carbon dioxide emissions on the road network, and ensuring that these are falling in line with the NSW target. In turn, this would encourage Transport to increase contributions to Active Transport projects, and think twice about wasting money on motorway projects that don't reduce emissions or solve congestion.

Thank you for taking the time to review my submission. I look forward to the issues being discussed at the inquiry, and would appreciate a written response to the items I have raised.

Kind regards,

Tim Giles

Rozelle Interchange - Active Transport Safety Issues

To: info@rozelleinterchange.com.au

Hi there,

I am writing to advise of residual issues arising from the recent WestConnex Iron Cove Link works, relating to both safety and incomplete works.

Issue 1: Shared Path Pinch Point

Location: Approx 17 Victoria Rd, Drummoyne. This is the shared path that accesses the new Iron Cove Bridge path.

The Shared Path area has been narrowed due to the new Variable Message Board pylon and a power pole, which has resulted in a pinch point between the new line marking and parked cars. The pinch point is compounded by an upcoming bollard which makes avoiding a potential head on collision more difficult. Note also that the legality of parking at this location is unclear. The photo shows available path width of approximately 1m, and this does not include an allowance for any door opening hazard.

The WestConnex Urban Design and Landscape Plan ("UDLP") Pedestrian and cycle implementation strategy, section 11.5, point 6, p11-3, required adherence to Cycling Aspects of Austroads Guides. The latest Edition of this guide states a desirable path width of 3m, with a minimum of 2.5m (Table 7.6).

What is the plan to remove the conflict with parked vehicles, and return a safe minimum path width of 2.5m?



Looking North West



Looking South East towards Iron Cove Bridge path

Issue 2: Poles in active transport paths

Location: Multiple locations on shared path adjacent Victoria Rd between Terry St and Robert St. This path is the main cycle route between Gladesville Bridge and Anzac Bridge, and has significant bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

Placement of signage poles in the middle of marked Shared Path lanes has created multiple collision hazards. Of particular concern is the use of unnecessary poles, and the lack of reflective markings on the poles.

Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 6A: Paths for Walking and Cycling, 5.1.1 talks to Clear Width. "The widths provided in this Part are for a clear width on a path (Figure 5.1). Intrusions in or over a path, such as vegetation, signs, poles, fences or seats may become obstacles or hazards to path users, reducing the width of the clear path and should be removed wherever practicable".

It is certainly possible to remove these hazardous poles. Note that pole removal is the best risk mitigation method, and marking of poles should only be done when a pole is absolutely required (which is not the case here).

Please confirm that poles located in the shared path will be removed as a priority. Some examples are shown below.



Approaching Darling St. Example of very poor pole placement, and the pole has no reflective markings. There is a gantry pylon immediately adjacent that should be used to hang the signs instead. Note the pole placement has now encouraged storage of rubbish bins on the path, please also address this follow-on issue.

The downhill lane is entirely unusable at this location. Poles need to be removed urgently.



Further poor pole placements near Terry St intersection.



Just past Wellington St. Example of better pole placement as it is at the side of the lane. However, the pole does not have reflective markings, and pole was not actually required as the existing pole supporting the green directional signage could have been used.



Approaching Darling St. Example of dangerous pole placement, in the middle of shared path downhill lane. Needs to be removed urgently.



Start of Iron Cove Bridge. Example of acceptable pole placement – pole is behind railing.

Issue 3: Shared Path markings in incorrect location

Location: Victoria Rd shared path, Northern side.

The centre line has been removed from the shared path. I am not sure what the purpose of that was, logic would dictate that removing lane guidance would only increase conflict between path users. In the picture below, the newly marked edge of the path is not actually at the property boundary. The line painters have been confused by the location of path expansion joints. There is already an occasional problem in this location with vehicles parking on the path, better line marking would assist. And perhaps properly fix the pot holes before adding paint.



Please remark the path edge in the correct location. Please reinstate the centre line.

Issue 4: Insufficient width of shared path.

Location: Northern side of Victoria Rd, Adjacent White Bay Power Station.

As TFNSW would be aware, this shared path is a main feeder to the Anzac Bridge, with significant pedestrian and cyclist movements. The path is generally approximately 2.5 m wide here, and contains significant incursions by many poles, leaving usable width of 2.0 m in places.

Prior to WestConnex, this portion of path could be bypassed by riding on the road and then using a cycle path access ramp located on the road overbridge. However, this ramp was removed during works and not reinstated. Cyclists are therefore now forced to use the narrow shared path.

The EIS requires a separated cycle way in this location: "Connecting the eastern side of the Rozelle Rail Yards along Victoria Road to the intersection of Robert Street, Separated Cycle Way, Approx length 250m" (Appendix N, Section 7.0, Table 7.1 Rozelle delivery of routes, p33). The ULDP (Table 11-20, row C1, p11-7) then deceptively stated that providing a "shared" path wider

than the current one would satisfy this EIS requirement of "separated" path, but in reality not even this change to a wider path was implemented. In fact, the path has been further encroached by the placement of poles inside the path.

The UDLP states "The path has been extended to the extent of the project works, to connect with the existing active transport networks. It will provide for both pedestrians and cyclists, being generally 1 - 2 m wider than the current shared path in this location." However, the path has not yet been widened.

NSW Transport's Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects Policy requires that "every transport project funded by Transport must include provision for walking and cycling within the core scope of the project. This is particularly relevant to infrastructure projects, where early consideration and delivery of safe, integrated, reliable, accessible and connected walking and cycling infrastructure will enhance the local environment, help drive behavioural change and achieve a sustained uptake in mode share of walking and cycling."

What has been delivered satisfies neither the EIS nor the ULDP, and does not support NSW Transport's Policy. This situation is also slap in the face for the consultation process, and particularly galling because the treatment at this location was supposed to set a precedent for the Victoria Rd path through to the Iron Cove Bridge. EIS Appendix N, section 5.0 states "A future project would be possible along the remainder of Victoria Road between Springside Street and Robert Street for a new pedestrian and cycleway. This link would be contingent upon revisions to the Victoria Road carriageway that would be made possible due to the anticipated traffic reductions as a result of the Iron Cove Link." Concurrently, EIS Appendix N, section 4.1.2 states "The key route requirements are to:...Provide a template for the treatment of cycleways and footpaths along the remainder of Victoria Road." The project has failed to achieve this requirement.

Further, the shared path that has been provided does not meet Transport for NSW's own Cycleway Design Toolbox specifications, which in section 3.4 state that:

"Shared paths are not suitable in the following environments:

- Locations with intersecting pedestrian and bicycle movements, such as near entrances to schools, rail interchanges or near busy pedestrian crossings
- Locations with moderate to high bicycle or pedestrian activity, including where there is significant pedestrian queuing and storage such as at busy signalised pedestrian crossings or during special events
- Sections with relatively high cycling speeds
- Narrow sections along the route

The desired minimum width of a shared path is 4.0m, allowing for safe overtaking and pedestrian interactions. Wider shared paths should be considered in environments where:

- Space allows
- Higher numbers of people walking or cycling are expected
- Higher cycling speed is expected
- Higher amounts of 'cross shared path movements' exist
- Limited sight lines are prevalent"

Clearly, not only has the promised path not been implemented, but what has been left in place does not meet Transport's own guidelines. This is despite part of the business case for the Iron

Cove Link being predicated on a reduction in road traffic making increased active transport infrastructure possible.

Without wanting to dictate a solution, I see two options: Reclaiming the kerbside lane (possible due to the reductions in road traffic), or extending the width 2m towards the white bay power station. Both of these options are on government land so I would expect a quick decision is possible.

Please deliver on the UDLP commitment by providing, at a minimum, a clutter free shared path that is 4m in width between the project limits (Robert St to Anzac Bridge approach). Please ensure that any poles do not encroach on the usable 4m path width. Please provide the design details for the template for the treatment of cycleways and footpaths along the remainder of Victoria Road.



This is the main Active Transport access to Anzac bridge from Victoria Rd, and a NSW Government designated "Strategic Cycling Corridor". The Cyclist here is dealing with a bus, several poles and pedestrians. This infrastructure is unsafe, unacceptable, and not compliant with the EIS or UDLP. Even WestConnex admits that the path infrastructure provided is only worthy of "footpath" designation. Note that cycling on footpaths is generally illegal (Road Rules Reg 250), so this sign only adds confusion.

Issue 6: Path bumps

Location: Anzac Bridge Shared Paith, Western approach.

The bumps in the path, implemented through rapid changes in pavement gradient, appear to provide no particular purpose. The are dangerous in that an unsuspecting cyclist could lose control. In particular, heading west down the Anzac Bridge off ramp and signalling a right hand turn to the underpass means that a cyclist hits the bumps when they have one hand off the handle bars. This is path "design feature" that cyclists are unfamiliar with – I am not aware of it being used elsewhere. Further, they are impossible to see and there are no markings.

The WestConnex Urban Design and Landscape Plan ("UDLP") Pedestrian and cycle implementation strategy, section 11.5, point 6, p11-3, required adherence to Cycling Aspects of Austroads Guides. The Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 6A: Paths for Walking and Cycling, section 3.1 General -

Safe: "Path networks should:

• provide surfaces that provide good surface grip, are free of tripping hazards, smooth, clear of obstructions and are well maintained"

Please remove the dangerous bumps in the path and re-lay with a smooth surface.



Yes, they are hard to see, and that's part of the point.

Issue 7: Path / road interface

Location: Lilyfield Rd, approx. opposite Ryan St. This issue is located on the main East-West route to Anzac Bridge, where the Lilyfield Rd cycleway diverts into the new Rozelle Parklands.

Temporary ramps have been installed. These are already showing damage from being run over by vehicles, resulting in steep lips and a consequently a falls risk.

Please provide a permanent solution, including appropriate cyclist protection from moving cars, and cars parking across the ramps. If you need to work with Inner West Council on this, then please do so ASAP. There is a window of opportunity to resolve this during the asbestos removal project when the cycleway is closed. Further closures should be avoided.



Temporary ramps are already showing the effects of being run over by road vehicles.

Issue 8: Safety Audit Transparency

The issues I have raised relate to the Iron Cove Link portion of the project only, and based on my observations. Pre-opening Safety Audits are an important component of identifying any residual safety issues with a project.

Please supply a full copy of the pre-opening Bicycle Safety Audit for the WestConnex project. The expected format is listed in *Cycling Aspects of Austroads Guides, Appendix G.* Please also confirm that the audit was completed both on foot and by bicycle as required by section G1.

Summary

WestConnex is a multibillion dollar taxpayer funded road project. Active Transport users from Annandale, Lilyfield, Rozelle and surrounding suburbs have suffered through four years of disruption, dust, and diversions. There is an expectation that the infrastructure that was promised is delivered, and not compromise safety. Sentiment in the community is that this is not what has occurred, however most Active Transport users have given up campaigning for change (early experiences with WestConnex staff may be partially to blame).

The ask should be clear, please contact me if not. Thank you in advance for addressing these concerns, and I look forward to your commitment on each point.

Kind regards,

<u>Tim Giles</u>