

**Submission
No 15**

INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE ROZELLE INTERCHANGE

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Date Received: 17 March 2024

2024 | Joseph McCowage



Rozelle Interchange

Inquiry into the Impact of the Rozelle Interchange

Impact on Drummoyne

A personal perspective with recommendations

The Problem

The increased traffic and at time gridlock has caused extensive delays, particularly for Western morning traffic on Victoria road between the Iron Cove Bridge and Lyons road. There has been a marked deterioration in driver behaviour with many incidents of aggressive confrontations with other cars and pedestrians. The drivers are resorting to using quiet residential streets as rat runs driving at high speed and blatantly ignoring give way and stop signs, driving on the other side of traffic islands to jump queues of cars, running amber/red traffic lights and running long distances on the Bus Lane on the Gladesville Bridge heading east and then bullying their way back into orderly traffic who have driven responsibly and legally. Pedestrians are continuously harassed and subjected to aggressive and bullying behaviour when attempting to cross the road. Access to the East and West of Drummoyne has been severely impacted except during the brief periods of low traffic flows. The changes to morning Traffic Light sequencing on the Victoria Road Park Avenue intersection has again disadvantaged pedestrians. The Rozelle interchange has seriously and negatively impacted on amenity of the residents of Drummoyne. The Rozelle interchange has caused severe traffic issues for drivers. The situation regarding the impact on pedestrians is perilous.

Impact on Residents of Drummoyne

There has been a negative and severe impact on the residents of Drummoyne. The changes to traffic flows has led to severe congestion and gridlock. Road users have reacted to the situation by attempting to bypass choke points by establishing alternative routing via quiet residential streets often at high speed whilst driving in an aggressive and often threatening brinkmanship in confrontations with other road users and pedestrians.

Lack of Integration

Whilst the project boasts of the scale of the kilometres of tunnelling and large budget, there appears to have been little consideration of the need to integrate the project into the existing road system. The Iron Cove Bridge is a major traffic route in Sydney and a squeeze point. Victoria Road is fed from a large catchment area from the Inner West, West and North over the Gladesville Bridge. The area I would like to focus on is the situation close to the Western end of the Iron Cove Bridge.

There are significant local flows in addition to Victoria Road. Traffic from Henley Marine Drive now joins via the recently and thankfully reopened slip road joining the major flows from Victoria Road, Lyon's Road as long as other feeders including Park Avenue, Thornley Street, Church Street, Day Street and Edwin Street. Traffic exiting Victoria Road to Park Avenue, the major Shell service stations, Thornley Street are often at high speed with little account for pedestrians.

Park Avenue

The situation in Park Avenue is chaotic. Traffic from the Drummoyne peninsular and informal bypassing traffic a.k.a. "rat runs" collide at the intersection of Park Avenue and Renwick Street. The geometry of the intersection is complex with an offset in Renwick Street which has rarely observed Give Way signs to Park Avenue traffic heading South West to the One Way section of Park Avenue. There are no pedestrian crossings, only refuges, in the North Western of Renwick Street and the North Eastern Crossing of Park Avenue despite the high pedestrian foot traffic between Victoria Road Bus Stops and the Birkenhead Shopping Centre.

The speed of some drivers attempting to make the lights before the change can be quite frightening despite the area being signposted as a high pedestrian traffic area. The 50 km speed limit is totally inappropriate and should be reduced to no more than 40 KPH in Park Avenue and Renwick Street between Park Avenue and Henley Marine Drive. Installation of Zig Zag lines and rumble strips on the approach to the Park Avenue and Renwick Street intersection should be considered. Anything to reduce the approach speeds in this dangerous chicane.

In the last 12 months, the power pole and a street sign on the Western Corner of the Victoria Road and Park Avenue intersection were knocked down, the Street Light pole for the Birkenhead Roundabout was knocked over as well as two small roundabout road signs. Surely this is indicative of the frustrations of the drivers leading to aggressive and dangerous driving in reaction to the chaos that the Rozelle Interchange has imposed on the area.

After the replacement of the Power Pole, the traffic light sequencing for pedestrian traffic has been changed to require a button press to permit pedestrians to cross. This results in many pedestrians to simply cross against the red light as the situation means that the vehicular traffic cannot pass. Previously this had sensibly always been Green in this case. Now you are training people to cross against the Red which is a very dangerous situation in human behaviour to habituate them to doing something which is potentially unsafe.

Drivers on Renwick Street wanting to go straight through to Henley Marine Drive are regularly observed crossing to the wrong side of the Pedestrian Refuge concrete median strip to bypass traffic queues on Renwick Street wanting to turn right. The Park Avenue and Renwick Street intersection needs to be Traffic Light Controlled to manage the high and competing traffic flows as well as provide safe and controlled pedestrian access to the Birkenhead Shopping Centre.

Vehicles turning left onto Formosa Street from Park Avenue rarely observe the Stop Sign and it is never enforced.

Summary

The implementation of the Rozelle Interchange cannot be considered in isolation. Its introduction must take account of the negative impacts that it has imposed on the community and road users. Therefore critical impacts close to the Iron Cove Bridge need to be addressed quickly as they are integral to the introduction of the interchange. There is a moral responsibility to make good the problems introduced by the interchange. The longer they are left, the more difficult it will be to recover .

Joseph McCowage

17 March 2024