



NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan Team
Transport for NSW
GPO Box K659
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Draft NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan

We refer to this draft Plan which was released in September. The Glebe Society appreciates the opportunity to comment on how the Plan can be strengthened. The submission that follows was prepared by its Transport and Traffic Committee transport@glebesociety.org.au. Please include it on your circulation list.

The Glebe Society has a strategy for improving transport for people living in Glebe that largely focuses on improving public transport in and around Glebe and to destinations taken by Glebe residents. **We believe that an efficient and attractive public transport system is vital for our densely populated inner suburb as are steps to make cycling and walking safe and attractive options.**

Our view is that transport is about people and not cars. We believe that in the longer term the use of private motor vehicles in Sydney, with the associated costly investment required in roads and other infrastructure and the problem of traffic congestion, should not be promoted and encouraged. Rather, the use of public transport, walking and cycling need to be made attractive options for commuters. In our view this is best done through the development of an integrated and viable public transport system and providing facilities for safe cycling and walking.

For these reasons we support the initiatives set out in the draft Plan **to improve and integrate the public transport system in Sydney and to make cycling and walking safe and attractive options**, and we ask that funding be made available by the NSW Government to put these initiatives into effect. While we recognise that certain road projects will need to be undertaken in Sydney, our view is that investment in public transport and the encouraging of cycling and walking will have far greater long term benefits.

Public Transport Initiatives

Accordingly we support the initiatives contained in the draft Plan relating to Public Transport, Rail, Light Rail, Bus, Ferries, Cycling and Walking as summarised in Chapter 9 and as fully described throughout the draft Plan. We see these initiatives as going towards creating a high class transport system for Sydney. In particular we believe that real benefits lie in the development of an integrated public transport system as proposed and we applaud the initiatives proposed to bring about this integration, such as the Opal system, accurate and modern real-time and way-finding information and the alignment of public transport timetables. We also believe that investment in a modern transport fleet and investment in interchanges as announced in the draft Plan are critical.

Light Rail

We believe however that the draft Plan can be strengthened in respect of the proposals relating to light rail. In our view the development of a comprehensive light rail system should be a key strategy of a public transport system in and around the localities that experience high commuter traffic. Light rail can play a major role in reducing traffic congestion and should be an integral part of the transport system of a modern and developing city like Sydney.

We would prefer that a commitment be made in the final Plan to building light rail in the three inner Sydney corridors identified on page 154 of the draft Plan ; the Sydney CBD , to the University of Sydney and to University of NSW with a link to Randwick. The draft Plan refers to these projects as requiring further consideration. We believe however that there needs to be a firm commitment to these projects.

The benefits of light rail are well set out on pages 154 and 155 of the draft Plan and we note reference in the draft Plan to a new light rail line having the capacity to carry up to 12,500 passengers in the morning peak hour with significant reduction of traffic resulting. We consider that the light rail line proposal for George Street would have very significant benefits for the CBD, for commuters, tourists, retailers and other businesses alike and will confirm Sydney in the ranks of attractive, modern and progressive international cities. Extending light rail along these corridors will also make it a meaningful option for Glebe residents and for those living in the other inner west suburbs served by the present light rail line, including the extension to Dulwich Hill. For instance, building light rail down George Street to Circular Quay will give many commuters direct access to their place of work in the CBD which the present light rail service does not achieve because it terminates at Central Station.

Infrastructure NSW Report

We refer to the report released by Infrastructure NSW earlier this month. While we appreciate that this report deals with separate objectives to the draft Master Plan and is concerned with identifying all major infrastructure projects for NSW, there are certain aspects of the Infrastructure NSW report which, if implemented, will undermine key options for the development of a viable public transport system in Sydney. As such we believe these aspects should be rejected by the NSW Government.

In particular, we refer to the proposal put forward by Infrastructure NSW to replace plans for light rail in George Street with a network of bus tunnels in the CBD. As mentioned, we believe light rail should be a key component of an integrated and efficient public transport system for Sydney and abandoning the light rail option for the CBD would be a retrograde step. Further, the construction of bus tunnels in the CBD is likely to impinge on heavy rail corridors in the area and so will jeopardise the potential for developing further rail infrastructure in the CBD which we consider must be retained as an option.

Secondly we refer to the rejection by Infrastructure NSW of the need for a second harbour crossing for rail in the foreseeable future. We believe that failure to build a second harbour crossing within the next twenty years will weaken the role of rail as a viable public transport option for greater Sydney and will be detrimental to Sydney's public transport system as a whole.

We are also concerned about the emphasis in the report given to more road projects for Sydney. In

particular we refer to the WestConnex Project. While we appreciate that the report does not identify the exact route of the “inner west” section of the WestConnex Project (and the routes of the associated road connections in the inner west) , we would be concerned if this project were to result in increased traffic flows in and around Glebe.

We recognise the need for some new roads for Sydney, particularly in the outer suburbs and to key localities such as the airport, but we believe Glebe and greater Sydney would be best served by the development of a high class public transport system. Ultimately more roads lead to more traffic congestion and in the short to medium term undermine investment in public transport. The experience of many other cities in the world, including Los Angeles and Auckland, attests to this.

Yours truly

John Gray

President
October 26, 2012